PlayStation

RACING SPECIAL | 1998 | £5.99

Official UK

PlayStation

Racing Special

M P H

RACING SPECIAL 1998

Official UK **PlayStation** Magazine

The BEST racing games in the world EVER!

In the interest of safety, before setting off on any journey, repeat the words, "I am not playing Gran Turismo, the most realistic dri-ving experience ever, with unparallelled graphics and two player dual shock controller" three times.

70

Attention:REMEMBER YOU ARE NOT PLAYING GRAN TURISMO

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LUCKY BLEEDER

You are a lucky bleeder, or are about to become a lucky bleeder. If you already own this magazine then you can relax, safe in the knowledge that you will never need to ask any more questions ever about the state of racing games on the PlayStation because, well... all you ever needed to know about racing games on the PlayStation is in this magazine.

Inside these pages you will find a review of every racing game on the PlayStation, previews and news on life-changing games (like *Driver*, page 44, or *Ridge Racer* 4, page 14) plus competitions, driving tips to drive you round the bends, a massive feature on the history of videogames (page 22), there's even a quiz and a test paper crammed in here. And that's just the *inside* of the magazine.

On the outside of the magazine in the novel packaging you may have noticed a shiny circular thing... there's a picture of it next to this column, see that? Both you and I know that this 10 demo CD is the greatest thing around this winter; *GT* on its own would be enough but we give you more, so go on, get the CD, stick it in your machine and enjoy.

**Will Groves, Editor**

3 MPH

TOURING CARS JUST GOT REVV UP

MORE CARS

MORE TRACKS

MORE CRASHES

MORE ACTION

- 9 NEW INTERNATIONAL TRACKS AND 7 NEW CARS

- TOUGH TACTICS - PIT STOPS AND CAR SET-UP OPTIONS

- SOUPED UP HI-RES GRAPHICS AND REAL-TIME WEATHER CHANGES

- CHOICE OF MODE - FULL CHAMPIONSHIP, ARCADE STYLE, TIME TRIAL, SINGLE RACE, SUPPORT CAR, MULTI-PLAYER OR LINK-UP

| ENHANCED SPECIAL EFFECTS ENGINE | 8 OFFICIAL TEAMS WITH 16 CARS | 9 NEW INTERNATIONAL CIRCUITS | FULLY FUNCTIONAL DASHBOARDS | 8 REAL-LIFE CIRCUITS WITH REAL TIME LIGHTING | 7 FURTHER MAKES OF RACING CARS |

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COMPETITIONS

Free stuff, glee stuff, stuff to make you laugh like a drain, stuff to make you feel no pain... we just can't introduce them very well.

PREPLAY

A sneak peek at the games almost ready for the shelves. Is it looking good or is it looking terrible? *We* give you the lowdown.

PLAYTEST

Every game, whether old or new is reviewed and each one gets a new, Test of Time score... how are your favourites holding up?

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Rally Cross

FEATURE

The gospel of the videogame is that whenever a new console is born, it's first shall be a racing game; they are the most popular entertainment on any console and are normally the force that pushes the technology to the limits. We look back through the brief history of videogames to take a glance at the landmarks in racing and driving games.

REGULARS

To complement the comprehensive

coverage of the racing game genre in

this *Racing Special,* we've stuck the

ultimate racing demo disk on the

outside of it. There are 10 playable

versions of some of the top

PlayStation racing games available

all of which we've raved about.

Now you can see for yourself.

Problems with your CD?
Pack up your troublesome cover disc in an envelope and send it back to *The Racing Special* at the address on the contents page. Remember to include your own address. We will test it and, if it is faulty, we'll send you another CD.

Gran Turismo

■ PLAYERS:	TWO
■ PRICE:	£34.99
■ AVAILABILITY:	HIGH STREET

When news of the depth of this game first leaked out of Japan we thought someone was yanking our chain. There was no way the game could really have 145 cars... could it? After just a few minutes playing we thought it might be something special. After a few hours we knew we had a classic on our hands. It's just the sheer scale of everything – absolutely everything can be tweaked, twiddled and generally altered. Buy cars, sell cars, paint your car, take various driving tests. It's a world of pistons, flanges and ball valves.

The real action, however, takes place on one of the 11 tracks. And the handling is as real as you will get. The demo offers you the choice of three cars (these can be found by clicking on the Available Cars menu) and the high speed yet twisty track of the Clubman Stage R5. You can even watch the replays.

■ CONTROLS
▶ to get menu after loading
D-pad Direction
⊗ Accelerate
Ⓞ brake

⊗	Reverse
Ⓞ	Emergency brake
R2	Shift up
L2	Shift down
L1	Rear view
R1	Change view

The game is Dual Shock compatible.

■ ADDITIONAL FEATURES
145 cars to choose from. 11 courses to drive on (22 if you include the mirror mode) and three licences to test your skills against. Music provided by such as Ash and Garbage and mixed by the Chemical Brothers.

■ THE REVIEWS
Our huge review of this truly magnificent game starts on page 64. As you may have guessed, we rather like this it.

Circuit Breakers

■ PLAYERS:	TWO
■ PRICE:	£39.99
■ AVAILABILITY:	HIGH STREET

Since the release of *Micro Machines V3* way back last year gamers have got used to the crazy antics of midget motors. So much so that developers all seem to be looking this way for the next 'racing experience'.

One of the first to reach the winner's rostrum is Supersonic, of *Supersonic Racers* fame, with their cracking *Circuit Breakers*. It's not a particularly beautiful game (it's not ugly mind) but it's so damn playable. In single-player mode the game belts along with each opponent making mistakes or attacking other cars – not bad for computer-controlled racers – but it's the multi-player game where the game takes that further step down the road to brilliance. It's fantastic. Not since *Micro Machines V3* have we stayed so long after work just playing a game.

■ CONTROLS
D-pad Direction
⊗ Speed
Ⓞ Brake
R1 Fire power-up
R2 Toggle power-up

■ ADDITIONAL FEATURES
Altogether *CB* offers the hardcore gamer an incredible 32 tracks to race. Some are hard, some are easy but all are enjoyable. And once you've finished these you earn a cheat to give you reversed courses. Not bad at all.

■ THE REVIEWS
Circuit Breakers is given the full five star treatment in the review section. Turn to page 74 to see just how good it is.

Colin McRae Rally

- **PLAYERS:** TWO
- **PRICE:** £39.99
- **AVAILABILITY:** HIGH STREET

For a long time Sega Saturn owners could rest on their laurels safe in the knowledge that they had by far the best rally game on any home console. However hard the PlayStation tried, the likes of *V-Rally*, *Rally Cross* and so on couldn't get close to the likes of *Sega Rally*, until now that is... Featuring 48 stages, taking in eight world locations, eight cars (with more to be uncovered) as well as the opportunity to tinker with your tyres, suspension and brake-balance. The handling is spot on and feels just right. At first it's a real trial to keep your Subaru Impreza on the road, but a trial worth persevering at. Without doubt this is the best rally game on the PlayStation.

CONTROLS
D-pad Direction
- ⊗   Speed
- ⬜   Brake
- ◯   Handbrake
- △   Change camera
- **Start**   Pause

The game is Dual Shock compatible.

ADDITIONAL FEATURES
The game features a rather strange system of racing against the clock instead of having other racers on the course at the same time. This might sound a bit dull but you'll be surprised just how intense the racing can get. For those of you who don't like this idea it is possible to race against a mate in one of three two-player modes.

THE REVIEWS
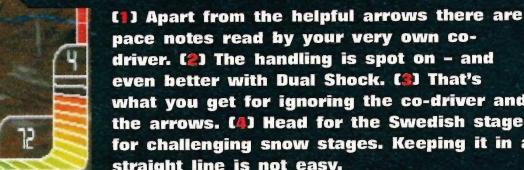
[1] Apart from the helpful arrows there are pace notes read by your very own co-driver. [2] The handling is spot on – and even better with Dual Shock. [3] That's what you get for ignoring the co-driver and the arrows. [4] Head for the Swedish stage for challenging snow stages. Keeping it in a straight line is not easy.

Destruction Derby 2

- **PLAYERS:** TWO
- **PRICE:** £19.99
- **AVAILABILITY:** HIGH STREET

Okay, so the first one was a bit rubbish but went on to sell by the bucket load, such was the interest in the subject. When the developers sat down to work on the sequel they had a huge list of improvements to include.

These featured a lot more tracks, making them wider so you could actually just race if you wanted and a range of deathbowls for maximum mayhem. The sequel was an unqualified success with one of the fastest game engines ever seen in a racing game. About the only thing we can fault *DD2* for is the dreadful soundtrack. Apparently one of the lead programmers thought his band was a bit good so used all their tracks. There's no accounting for taste.

CONTROLS
D-pad Direction
- ⊗   Accelerate
- ⬜   Brake/reverse
- △   Change the camera angle

ADDITIONAL FEATURES
Seven tracks of smashing racing, plus the extra arenas for total car-nage add up to a total computer racing experience that is well worth the measly 20 quid they're asking for.

THE REVIEWS

[1] The whole idea of this total carnage arena is to wreck all other cars before you get crippled yourself. Fun.

[2] This is the only time you're safe. [3] You're off the pace and almost the track too. [4] High impact racing.

Motorhead

[1] The futuristic backdrops are impressive. **[2]** There are eight circuits to race on. But the last is only available if you come top of the table. **[3]** The car's handle well with top skids and powerslides.

■ PLAYERS: TWO

■ PRICE: £19.99

■ AVAILABILITY: HIGH STREET

Looking like a futuristic *Ridge Racer*, *Motorhead* had the sheer bad luck of appearing on the shelves at the same time as a certain *Gran Turismo*. This is a shame as it's a damn fine game which deserved better. Playing like a modern day *Outrun* this in one of the best looking games on the market with Swedish developers Digital Illusions

chucking in every trick in the PlayStation's library. The result? A beautiful looking racing sim. 'So what if it looks good,' you ask, 'what about the game?' Well, fortunately the game is pretty smart too with some top handling, great skids and enough physics to pull off the perfect powerslide. What more do you want? To try it for yourself take the 'Asc II' car out for a spin on Goldbridge, the game's opening circuit on this demo.

■ CONTROLS
⊗	Accelerate
⊡	Brake
⊙	Brake
△	Change view
↓	Rear view
⑊	Gear down
⑉	Gear up

■ ADDITIONAL FEATURES
There are a whopping ten cars and eight circuits in the full version of *Motorhead*, with the last of each only available when the player has reached the top of the league. Punters will also find a delectable two-player split-screen mode, a ghost mode (for racing against previous best times) and a quick race option which bundles you immediately into the action without a 'by your leave'. It's pulse-quickening stuff.

■ THE REVIEWS
Page 87 will tell you everything you need to know about this rather impressive racer. But if you're the impatient kind, we rather like it, so wade straight in and try the demo version for yourself.

Rage Racer

■ PLAYERS: TWO

■ PRICE: £34.99

■ AVAILABILITY: HIGH STREET

If there was a game to chart the creation of *Gran Turismo* it has to be this one. When this was released in Japan it created quite a stir as it differed somewhat from the previous *Ridge* games. Gone were the simple powerslides, now you had to work for the corners. Added to the game was the idea of money; in previous

games you could pick any car you wanted but now you have to work your way through the budget range before you earn enough money to take out the top end cars. Once you've bought each car you can take it to the garage and get it tuned.

In the demo you take control of the first car, the Gnade Esperanza, in the Class Three circuit called the Mythical Coast. The pressure's on because it's the last lap and you're in 12th spot: last. But once you get to grips with the car you'll find yourself flying past the back markers. Unlike the previous games,

Rage's circuits are far more undulating so you find yourself slowing dramatically on the climbs.

Remember if you spin the car about 180° you can practice the course as often as you want in the reverse direction.

■ CONTROLS
D-pad	Direction
▶ START	Pause
⊙	Brake
⊗	Accelerate

■ ADDITIONAL FEATURES
The basic cars cost 3000 or 4000 to buy... the best ones cost close to 700,000. So, a lot of work there then. There are four tracks including a huge oval perfect for testing out the new tune-up. Be warned, this is a very fast game.

■ THE REVIEWS
We spend a page telling you just how good this game is on page 90.

[1] "Be warned, this is a very fast game." **[2]** Looks like a Renault 5 twin-turbo in a fantastically rendered cityscape.

[3] The choice of cars is fabulous. But you have to earn money to buy the better ones.

S.C.A.R.S.

Set 'sometime in the future' this is one of most adventurous games to hit the PlayStation for a long time thanks to its four-player split screen mode. This has been tried before with *Rally Cross* but anyone who played the aging Sony game knows it didn't really work (we're being polite). The closest thing PlayStation owners are going to get to *Mario Kart*, *S.C.A.R.S.* takes the driver along an undulating course where the key to success rests in proper powerslides and spot-on use of the huge variety of power ups which litter the course. Be sharp when you play the demo though, it doesn't last very long.

■ CONTROLS

D-pad	Direction
⊡	Reverse
◎	Brake
▲	Change view
✕	Speed
R1	Fire weapon
R2	Swap weapon
L1	Jump
L2	Rear view

■ ADDITIONAL FEATURES
To win nearly every race pick the Rhino car... it's very fast indeed. All you need to do is get in front and drive carefully.

■ THE REVIEWS
S.C.A.R.S. is given the serious once over by our racing team on page 94.

[1] Hanging the tail out is great fun in this racer. [2] Visually *S.C.A.R.S.* varies between pleasant and excellent. [3] More eye candy to enjoy. [3] Hit the gas when the green light shows.

Test Drive 5

First appearing in the late '80s, the series has come on considerably with last year's version seeing a good deal of success. Opting for the heavier side of steering, the *Test Drive 5* cars might not be as realistic as those in *Gran Turismo* but there is certainly something compulsive about the game; perhaps it's the twisty turny tracks, or the heavy traffic which appears mid-race, or could it be that all the tracks are based on real-life locales with recognisable streets and shops? We're not sure but it's a lot of fun... give it a go.

■ CONTROLS
D-Pad Direction

✕	Speed
⊡	Brake/reverse
▲	Change view

The game is also compatible for Dual Shock use.

■ ADDITIONAL FEATURES
The game features 17 courses, 28 vehicles and more crashes than any game you've ever played before in your life. New to the sequel is a great two-player, split-screen game for truly competitive action.

■ THE REVIEWS
Released a couple of weeks ago, the game is reviewed on page 95.
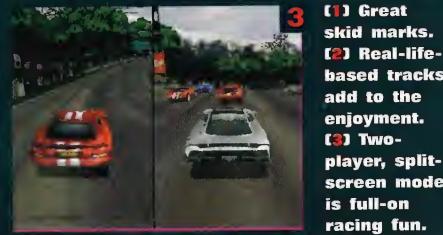
[1] Great skid marks. [2] Real-life-based tracks add to the enjoyment. [3] Two-player, split-screen mode is full-on racing fun.

TOCA

■ PLAYERS: ONE

■ PRICE: £19.99

■ AVAILABILITY: HIGH STREET

So then, is *TOCA* just a driving game? We don't think so. What about the sophisticated control response, millimetre-perfect replication of factory model cars, detailed track design using Ordnance Survey information...? It might look like you're just pegging around Brands Hatch at insane speeds, but as the first bend sends you rollercoasting into a 360° spin, it's obvious Codemasters have created a driving simulation of the highest quality.

But, as our demo will attest, a racing game *TOCA* most definitely is. Along with a rather attractive rolling demo, we've included a two-lap race from the Donnington circuit. Whether using the standard joypad or, preferably, the more responsive Analog pad, steer your Honda around the course, try to keep up with your 15 opponents and, most importantly, complete the challenge in under three and a half minutes. Sound easy? Well, it would be on *Micro Machines*, but with a car that actually behaves like the real thing, that standard driving game practice of simply keeping your foot hard on the pedal and hoping for the best is certainly not recommended. Good luck. You'll need it...

■ CONTROLS

D-pad	Directions
△	Change view
◎	Horn
⊡	Brake
⊗	Accelerate
▶ START	Pause

■ ADDITIONAL FEATURES
As well as superb graphics and relentless pace, *TOCA* also features the dulcet tones of *Top Gear*'s Tiff Needell. This is a good thing, we think.

■ THE REVIEW
'Right up there with the best' is this issue's verdict (Page 132) and *TOCA* fully deserves its 9/10.

[1] It's a Renault and it's fast, but very little here isn't. **[2]** Get ready for bumper-to-bumper racing. **[3]** There's no pressure. Honest.

Wipeout 2097

[1] A speedy sponsor for a speedy game. **[2]** It doesn't get any easier in the dimly lit tunnels. **[3]** There are now plenty of weapons for use on your rivals. **[4]** Too close for comfort.
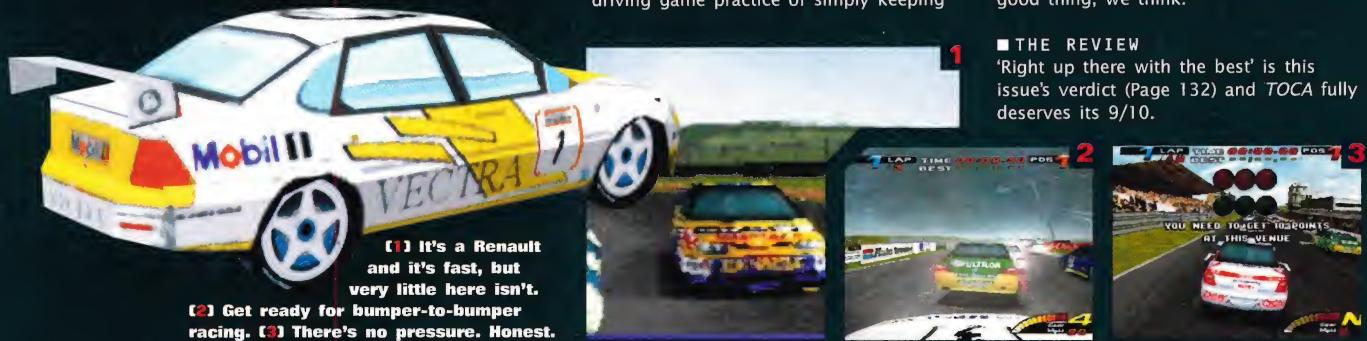
■ PLAYERS: TWO

■ PRICE: £19.99

■ AVAILABILITY: HIGH STREET

The original *Wipeout* was released on the very same day as the PlayStation and soon sold out. This wasn't because ther other games were crap, more likely that it was such an incredible game that everyone felt they had to have one. After intense gameplay, and more than a little showing off to 16-bit owning mates, a few faults appeared. Most common among these was that the game was considered a little bit too tough. So when it came to designing the sequel it was foremost in Psygnosis' collective mind to make the game considerably easier (though it might not seem so on the later tracks). Also a new range of weapons was added including the superbly powerful Quake Bomb – this can't be described – you have to see it in action. So, incredibly enough, Psygnosis have managed the impossible – they've made the excellent *Wipeout* even better.

■ CONTROLS

△	Change view
⊡	Discard weapon
◎	Fire
⊗	Thrust
▢	Right airbrake
▢	Left airbrake

Press and to return to the main menu.

■ ADDITIONAL FEATURES
What more do you want? How about eight tracks, five craft, some cracking cheat codes (see page 129) and a great soundtrack. Okay, so the tunes might be a couple of years old but they surely make for one of the best soundtracks on any game we've played. As if this lot wasn't good enough there is a fantastic two-player, link-up mode just gagging for you to smack your mates up.

■ THE REVIEW
You can find the glowing review of this racer on page 112.

COMPETITION

WIN!

16

Officially Endorsed Mad Catz Steering Wheels!

The Mad Catz Steering Wheel, constructed by handymen in the United States, became an instant hit with gamers when it was imported to the UK last year. Featuring a super-grip wheel, foot pedals and enough buttons to cope with any game you might think of this is a sound wheel. To get your hands on set simply follow the instructions below.

QUESTION:

THERE'S NO QUESTION, JUST A REQUEST.

MAKE US LAUGH. THE BEST JOKES WILL WIN THE PRIZE.

SEND YOUR ANSWER, ALONG WITH YOUR ENTRY VOUCHER* FROM THE CD PACKAGE ON THE COVER TO:
COMPOS,
OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION RACING SPECIAL
30 MONMOUTH ST
BATH
BA1 2BW

*Check out our other compos. If you want to enter these as well include your answers along with your voucher too. You might as well enter them all, really...
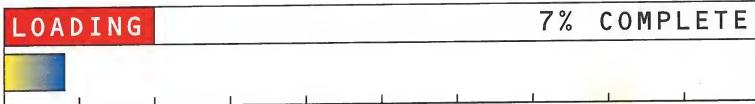
R4 – THE MASTER RETURNS

NAMCO AIM TO RECLAIM POLE POSITION

[1 – 3] These night time shots give a good indication of both the advanced lighting techniques and the impressive draw distances that will (touch wood) that will mark *R4* as a landmark racer. [4 – 7] Although the pre-release publicity claims 300+ cars, many will be paintjobs only. [8] Zoom.

[1 – 2] Overtaking will be much improved, thanks to some refined collision detection routines.

A unanimous highlight of October's Tokyo Games Show was Namco's *R4: Ridge Racer Type 4*, the latest addition to the racing dynasty that got many of us into PlayStation in the first place. It's not out in Japan until December, but already many experts are tipping this as the racer to force *Gran Turismo* into the pits for an update.

And let's not pretend that those two words "Gran" and "Turismo" haven't played a big part in *R4*'s development. Namco is as aware as anyone else that a lot's changed since 1997's *Rage Racer*, but that doesn't stop them feeling confident. "*Gran Turismo* was definitely a good game," concedes Shigeru Yokoyama, head of Namco's Consumer R&D Division, "but while both games can be classified as racing games, the two titles are totally different. *Gran Turismo* is more of a racing simulation, our racing games are good and fun."

In other words, the original pedal-to-the-metal formula of reality-defying power slides and indestructible cars remains intact. This is, in spirit, a *Ridge Racer* game in the traditional mould. But what's got the Japanese pundits so excited is that Namco's somehow managed to teach this old dog so many new tricks.

First off, the graphics are gob-smacking. Namco has upped the detail of not only the car models (although they aren't actually real cars) but also the tracks and scenery. The colours and textures of the game world flashing by are breath taking. We don't use the word "beautiful" often, we *are* blokes, but this

[1] This should be the fastest racing game available. [2] A render, possibly, but an indication of the semi-fantastic cars on offer. [3] Split-screen *Ridge Racer!* [4] Split-screen LINK-UP *RIDGE RACER!!!* [5 - 8] We Skid you not.

has us coming close. There are also some great lighting effects, such as the "trails" of headlights on the night levels and sun flare during the day. Never before has a PlayStation racing game looked so fine.

And this ain't just a paint job.

Namco's been busy under-the-hood, too. *R4* features eight tracks, over 300 car variations, and a new grand prix season feature in which players not only have to win races to earn cash, but also negotiate the trials and tribulations of being part of

a racing team (Namco hints that there are even trace elements of an RPG to be found here). The point being that replay value has been added to a game that always made a great first impression, but tended to grow old fast. Of course, it's how the game plays that's most important and this is where Namco's hit paydirt. With an updated physics model that adds realism to the crashes without ever sapping the arcade thrills, *R4*'s a joy to drive. What more could you ask for?

Turn the page for some exciting *R4* peripheral news

[1 - 2] Even these relatively early replay shots show the in-game engine off to good effect, as in *Gran Turismo*. [3 - 6] Yet more lushness.

R4
RIDGE RACER TYPE 4

More *Ridge Racer 4* 'information': It's strongly rumoured that Namco's potential masterpiece will arrive as a two CD package, and include an updated, hi-res, 60 frames per second version of the original *Ridge Racer* (that's twice the original frame rate). This new *Ridge* will also support the JogCon (see page 16 for details). Regardless of whether you dare to believe such wildly exciting hearsay, the game is still on schedule for a December 3rd release in Japan and should arrive here sometime in the Spring... Following some fairly drastic 'strategy decision' (i.e. development redundancies in San Francisco and Manchester), Psygnosis have decided to 'refocus on existing, strong brands'. So what? In English this means that projects like *Wipeout 3* and *Destruction Derby 3* will finally get the go-ahead on PlayStation. Strange that Psygnosis needed such a rude wake-up call to realise that this is what we've all been gagging for all along... Meanwhile French giants Infogrames have started work on the sequel to their superb but now slightly dated off-roader *V-Rally*. Could it turn out to be a *Colin McRae Rally* beater? Let's hope so. Early whispers suggest that the ultra-twitchy handling will be retained, making this a game for skilled and committed drivers. That's us... Yet more sequel rumours and yet more (unsubstantiated) evidence of *Colin McRae Rally*'s massive influence. Gremlin's *Motorhead*, it's rumoured, will get a sequel and, yes, it'll take in new off-road dirt sections, just like *Gran Turismo 2* (see page 16 for the latest on *GT2*)... Namco have signed a deal with Codemasters allowing them to adapt the superb *Micro Machines v3* for coin-op arcade consumption...
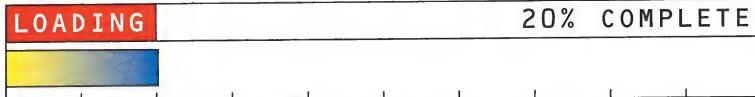
THE PAD TO HAVE

NAMCO REVEAL THEIR LATEST PERIPHERAL

Once again Namco have used the release of a *Ridge Racer* game as an excuse to muscle into the peripherals market with another innovative controller. Anybody familiar with the NegCon that appeared with the original *Ridge Racer* or the *Tekken* pad will vouch for the synergy between Namco hardware and software.

The JogCon looks like the best yet, featuring real force feedback as well as Dual Shock compatibiltiy. This means that not only will the pad judder and shake at several different frequencies (like any other DS pad) but that the large central wheel will actually fight against you in certain circumstances, as most coin-op racers already do. As far as we can tell, you'll be steering with both your thumbs, while the shoulder buttons will probably be your best bet for acceleration and breaking.

Namco haven't confirmed a UK relase but import controllers should work with *Ridge Racer Type 4*.

It's new and shiny and it looks like it is going to set the standard in racing joypads. The central wheel looks to be thumb-controlled and will use feedback from the game to fight against you as you power around corners.

MICRO MACHINES

Sony's all singing, all dancing PDA (a souped up memory card with a tiny LCD screen) will be utilised by *Ridge Racer 4*. As we go to press it's unclear exactly how the game will use the PDA's higher functions, but we do know that you'll be able to display and swap cars or upgrade parts with your mates and compare your best times in one large league table without downloading them to a PlayStation.

GRAN TURISMO 2

EARLY NEWS FILTERS THROUGH

The following information is unconfirmed but comes to us from reliable sources – at least 90% of the following is true. Probably.

First up, it seems that developers Polyphony are busy including off-road racing, presumably thanks to the extra 25% processing power that producer Kazunori Yamauchi has been widely quoted as claiming over and beyond the already astonishing *Gran Turismo*. We also hear that these dirt tracing sections will feature some top notch particle effects for flying dirt, dust and water. We'd also imagine that these will be used for smoke from tyres and exhausts.

These are the least exciting of the rumours, however. Technical advances are all very (very (very)) well, but it seems that, thanks to the global success of *GT*, previosuly unattainable brands like Ferrari and Porsche are begging to be involved in the sequel. We're also led to believe that each and every manufacturer is so keen to be involved that they've agreed to limited car damage and, allegedly, full-on rolls and flips. *Gran Turismo* should make its Japanese debut in the Spring of 1999, and we can expect it very soon after. Bate your breath.

FL 3:00:00
TT 0:07:12

Ever since *Gran Turismo* stunned the world any serious racing title needs to boast a really impressive, nigh-on photorealistic replay mode, like this one

FL 3:00:00
TT 0:18:76
TI 0:06:00

LE MANS GT RACING

24 HOUR PARTY PEOPLE

Le Mans. The name conjours up images of fast cars and glamour, the twin skills of being beautiful and having money combined with the more demanding talent of being able to drive well... if you have all three you've made it, if not, well, look at Princess Grace.

The next game from Eutechnyx looks set to hone your skills in the latter knack of driving. It is not just how to turn the wheel and which way the pedals work that *Le Mans* is aiming for though. As a 24 hour road race you have to develop strategies around when to pit-stop and what tyres to fit when you get there, thus creating a much deeper level game

than a regular arcade screecher. Andrew Perella is the Lead programmer of *Le Mans GT Racing* and is keen to point out the game's developments, "...it runs in very hi-res, features day and night racing and has highly detailed cars racing simultaneously."

The game also promises a fantasy line-up of cars from the last four years including Panoz, Gulf Team Davidoff, Marcos and many more, while initially the game was going to be a direct adaptation of this year's event before someone realised it would be quite limited as 80% of the cars were all the same make. Andrew is also keen to point out that while the game has been produced at the same time as Eutechnyx's other challeenger nigh-on *Max Power Racing* (page 46) it has used a compeletly different engine, physics model and runs at a higher resolution although certain routines were deveolped in tandem. We asked if this licence, which seems so natural as a companion to *Max Power Racing* would lead to a slew of exotic titles from the Newcastle-based programmers and were met with the usual wall of silence – but we in the office think it's only a matter of time before the Paris-Dakar endurance race is tackled on the PlayStation.

The engine's already looking rather impressive even at this early stage.
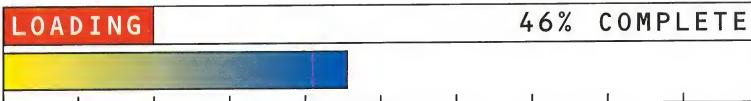
It might not look as good as *Vigilante 8* from Activision but it's crammed with loads more weapons and a massive variety of cars, trucks and buggies to make the most out of.

ROGUE TRIP
VACATION 2102

Right, here's a quick history lesson. The first two *Twisted Metal* games were developed by Singletrac for Sony. Soon after the success of the second game Singletrac were poached by GT Interactive but had to leave the name and characters with Sony. Therefore, this is the unofficial sequel of *Twisted Metal 2*, one of the most violent, and enjoyable, racing games around.

Since the appearance of *Twisted Metal 2*, the handling of the cars has been given a serious overhaul. Perhaps a certain racer called *Gran Turismo* has had something to do with this, in any case, now the cars actually handle like *real* cars... real cars with roof-mounted missiles and gatling guns welded to the doors that is.

Just as in the first two games the cars are armed to the fender and there are

plenty of extra add-on weapons that can be found as you go along – the mini-nuke is a particular favourite.

The basic premise of the game has been altered too. Instead of roaming around randomly blasting the other maniacs, this time you have to pick up tourists and take them to various photo spots, protecting them while they take snapshots from the bad guys with guns who are taking potshots.

CHOCOBO RACING
ROAD TO ILLUSION WORLD

After the success of the Chocobos in *FFVII*, the bosses at Squaresoft realised they were onto a good thing, so they sat about thinking where else they could use their big birds.

Following much wracking of brains and some rather heavy sessions of *Mario Kart*, the answer jumped out and hit them smack in the chops – *Chocobo Racing*. Ditching the fancy karts of other cartoon-style racers the Chocobos don rather special roller skates to take on the courses. All the characters have their own modes of transport with Dev Choco using a tricycle.

To give the game a touch more longevity there are three game modes to try out: Story Mode, Grand Prix Mode and Rally Mode. It's not certain if

Brand new screenshots hot from the CGI units deep in the depths of Squaresoft's Tokyo office. Looks rather smart eh?

SHOCKING!

MAXIMUM RUMBLE SENSATION WITH DUAL FORCE CONTROLLERS

GAMESTER PSX DUAL FORCE™ STEERING WHEEL

From the creators of the acclaimed Rumble Force Steering Wheel, this is the advanced Gamester PSX Dual Force™ Steering Wheel. 100% rumble compatible with PlayStation games featuring "Dual Shock™"coding, steering you closer to the action on every PlayStation game - guaranteed.

NEW!

NEW!

GAMESTER PSX DUAL FORCE™ ANALOGUE JOYPAD

Compatible with PlayStation games featuring "Dual Shock™" coding.

LEGO RACER

BLOCK BUILDING BRAND EXTENSION

When we were kids we didn't have these fangled videogames, you know. We had a rickety old Scalextric if we were lucky, but probably got by with un-powered toy cars. Thanks to Lego's ingenious attachable wheels you could even build your own, usually rubbish creations. Soon we'll be able to combine the modern delights of polygons with the living room vroom vroom joys of building in *Lego Racer*.

The idea is simplicity itself – use the pieces at your disposal to construct a motor and see how it gets on against others, hopefully built by your mates. Obviously, this is a game all about upgrades and two-player challenges. There's no confirmation of PocketStation compatibility yet, but you can bet your hind teeth on some sort of Memory Card challenge akin to *Gran Turismo*'s. Only not as good. Probably. *Lego Racer* will arrive next Spring.

Mmm, that seems to indicate a certain amount of give in the handling.

PRO BOARDER

PHAT AIR, SIR?

Cool Boarders, anyone? *X Games Pro Boarders* features its own stunt slope.

Make a slope, chuck some snow on it, strap yourself onto an expensive plank and you no longer need an engine for proper racing action. Just let gravity take the load.

X Games Pro Boarder is Electronic Arts' first foray into the increasingly lucrative snow boarding market and looks set to give *Cool Boarders 3* a run, or slide, for its money. As you'd expect, this is backed by a series of product pushing licenses. The X Games in the title

is from ESPN Winter X Games, the premier American snowboarding tournament, and there are also deals with clothing and equipment manufacturers like Burton and Morrow.

The polish doesn't end there. The soundtrack (in America at least) features such big names as the Foo Fighters and, um, Pennywise. Early indications are that an unspectacular control system will be bolstered by the best slope layouts yet seen in a snowboarding game. We'll be able to tell you more next year.

PERSONALITY TEST

What makes us tick so much faster when someone slips a racing disc into a PlayStation? Check out the psychology of racing games.

The first thing to note about racing is that it is so popular in the real world: motor racing is the most widely watched sport in the world. During the 1997 Formula 1 season for example, 83% of regular, middle-income blokes between 16 and 34 (that's you mate) watched one or more of the races on show. Now, if you're watching racing on the telly, walking past the billboards advertising it, reading magazines promoting it and chatting about it in the boozer then there is no doubt that you'll be interested in simulating the experience on your PlayStation. Capische?

On top of th universality of motor racing; cars, speed and machismo have always been strongly linked. Ever seen a 17-year-old driving around the town centre on a Saturday? Drum 'n' Bass kicking out of the tinny stereo in their mum's Fiat Panda thinking they are, in some massive way, pushing the land speed envelope, ever see that kind of person? Yes you have – there are hundreds and hundreds of sadly deluded lads with the need for speed coursing through their veins. Eventually, for some, the dichotomy of Fiat Panda and fast-paced driving thrills will become embarrsingly apparent and they will look elsewhere for ways to satiate their needs. Er... *Gran Turismo* anyone? This game caters to the desire of cars, the desire for speed and status

symbol perfectly. Check out the single-player tournament: the better you drive the more cash you get and the more cash you get the better the car you get and the better the car you get the better you perform and... see the cycle? Play this once mate and if there is any red blood in you at all then you are IN THAT GAME.

On top of this there is the multi-player element so successfully explored in *Micro Machines* and *Circuit Breakers*. Psychological tests have shown that multi-player games create greater and more violent reactions from players and machismo isn't about tea parties and doilies, it's about push and shove and so, yet again, you are IN THAT GAME.

On top of this there is the idea of the licence, people don't spend a fortune getting a licence just for the box art... although that helps because obviously, as in F1, you know all the drivers and all the tracks before you pick up and play. Added to this though is the fantasy element of wanting to BE your favourite driver. You might not admit to this (and you are wise to take that course of action) but a lot of folk like the world of pretend long after they have left their short trousers and temper-tantrums behind. Add all these factors together and you have an very good argument as to why the racing game is the game to play on the PlayStation. 'Fess up my friend, you are an addict.

We were speaking to Dr Mark Griffiths Reader in Psychology at Nottingham and Trent University.

Circuit Breakers get this and more violent and

COOL BOARDERS 3
It's Cool Boarders but not as you know it.

When folk start to discuss the year 1998 and whether or not it was a good one for racing games they'll point to the likes of *Gran Turismo*, *Colin McRae* and *Circuit Breakers* to suggest that it was. This is true of course, it's been a brilliant year but there's one game which doesn't immediately spring to mind; *Cool Boarders 2*. This hugely expanded sequel to the massively popular original somehow managed to avoid the critical acclaim it deserved when released at the start of the year.

Perhaps this was down to the shocking graphics engine which developers UEP Systems used to power the game. It wasn't that it wasn't fast enough; hardly, this was one of the fastest games at the time, but the dodgy landscapes gave the game such a ropey appearance that few gamers gave the game the time it deserved. Not so for *Cool Boarders 3* this,

[1] Use the replays to check out where you went wrong. [2] Each time you pull a stunt the name appears on the screen. [3] Nasty crash ahoy. [4] The snow looks so much better now.

they've sorted the problem and boy does the third instalment look good.

The first thing a *Cool Boarders* fan will notice is just how good the whole game looks. The snow is very solid, the board leaves a beautiful trail as it cuts through the snow and glides over the ice (with sound effects). Said boarders have been

[1] Landing on ice isn't as dodgy as you think. [2] 'And here's where I smacked into the ice.' Looks bad.

given a serious once over with the 'falling into a crumpled heap' animation chucked in the bin. Now the competitors tumble, roll, fall head over heels or just put a hand down for support. Where there might not be so many moves though is with the stunts themselves; there now seem to be a lot less with even more complicated tricks required to pull them off.

Looking at the course system it's pretty hard to believe this is the same series as this has had a major overhaul as well. Instead of having a lot of courses and a few special stunt tracks, *CB3* introduces a system of six mountains with each containing the various racing courses. This will give the gamer 24 courses to play with. Yet another change comes with the courses themselves. Gone are the micro-thin tracks with only one route, now the courses are very open with plenty of routes to choose from as you blast down the course. And did we mention they've included full Dual Shock support? It works like a dream. Keep an eye out for the Christmas release.

RUNNING WILD

For a long time racing games have been the sole domain of the adult games but now it looks like developer 989 Studio's have finally started to think about young gamers. 'Bout time too.

Unlike most racing games this one is aimed straight at the kiddies with cuddly, cutesy animals replacing the standard cars and trucks. Each animal has its own personality and attributes so if you opt for

the elephant expect this to go slower than the likes of the zebra (other animals include a bull and a panda). The action can be made more even with the useful addition of power-ups including the every present turbo. The game opens with three tracks to race (snow, desert and city) while another four can be opened if certain tasks are completed. The courses are just a cast of you and five other races, each one is laden with obstacles, chicanes and all range of tricks to ruin a gamers race.

One of the most interesting features is the inclusion of the four player mode. Instead of the common two players on one screen affair this mode allows four gamers to battle it out without the hassle of link cable. A nice touch. The game should be available just in time to ask Santa for it.

[1] The courses are rather tricky with obstacles designed to ruin your best time attempts. [2,3] The multi-player aspect is very important with a great two-player game.

BOMBERMAN RACES

Made famous by his bomb-chucking exploits on the early Nintendo systems that fat fella, Bomberman has had a fairly rough time on the PlayStation so far, what with the mediocre *Bomberman World* being his best effort to date. All this looks set to change though... get rady to meet up with *Bomberman Fantasy Races*.

There has been a dearth of decent, character-based racing games recently what with the likes of *Megaman Battle and Chase* doing its damndest to ruin the genre irreparably. However, this

is Hudsonsoft we're talking about – they're not going to screw up are they?

Well, we hope not and looking at the early screenshots we've got we shouldn't have too much of a problem as *Bomberman Races* quite obviously shares a great deal of heritage with the classic *Mario Kart*. With armed karts ready to fire out the usual combo of bombs, bananas and boosts it looks like everything is in place for a top comedy racing game. Hudsonsoft aren't too sure about a UK release yet but we're going to get on the blower to demand it right now.

[1] The split-screen game is going to be a highlight of the racing action. [2] It does look rather cute but you shouldn't hold that against the game. [3] When you apply the turbo boost flames appear out of the exhausts.

INDUSTRY
FORUM

TAKE A HANDFUL OF INDUSTRY CHARACTERS AND JOURNOS, SPRINKLE WITH WINE AND FINE FOOD THEN GRILL LIGHTLY ON THE RACING GAMES MARKET. SKIM OFF INTERESTING CHIT-CHAT AND SERVE. INGREDIENTS: CHRIS GIBBS, GUY WILDAY, RICHARD EDDY, ANDY SMITH AND ANDREW COLLINS.

Words: Andrew Collins
Pictures: Richard Robinson
Location: Clos du Roy, Bath

So what's your favourite PlayStation Racing game?

AS: It has to be *Gran Turismo*.

CG: It's eclipsed them all hasn't it?

GW: The depth is just amazing. It still amazes me just how many cars there are in the game.

AC: I'm a big fan of *Colin McRae* – it's exceptionally playable, the *Sega Rally* influence is obvious.

RE: I'm with Andrew on *McRae. Gran Turismo* was very glitzy but it's the dirt tracks of *McRae* that gives it a raw, rough, riding experience.

GW: *Sega Rally* was the real motivation behind doing it, the intention behind the whole thing was to recreate the handling, to get something that was that playable.

How long does it take to produce a game?

GW: In total it took us 18 months to produce *CMR*. The idea and the concept has been bouncing around Codemasters for a long time.

CG: Again, 18 months, by Christmas the whole thing (*Rollcage*) will be finished. We had the full team (15 people) on the game for the whole time. When we took the game to Psygnosis they'd had the *Wipeout* brand, the *Destruction Derby* brand and this is the new product.

Favourite Multi-player?

AS: My favourite multiplayer game is *Circuit Breakers* – it's a cracking game. *Micro Machines* broke the mould for this type of game.

AC: With *Micro Machines* it was a game that you found non-gamers playing.

CG: Do you think it was the game's sense of humour? It was accessible, it wasn't like 'I've got gears' – it was just stop and start..

RE: It is a very simple concept so anyone can pick up and play; it's essentially bumper cars. That's why it's such great fun to play when you've come back from a night out.

AC: It was the idea of just smacking your mates off the edge of the table – unbeatable – it's all about abusing your friends.

Right, aside from *Pole Position*, which was the most influential racing game in history?

RE: Aside from *Pole Position*..? Ooo, toughie.

CG: What was the first 3D game in the arcade, where you sat in the cabinet and had gears? It has to be *Hard Driving*.

AS: It was the first game with force feedback.

CG: And it was the first to perfect 3D rather than use bitmapped 3D. This is the one that started the true polygon world for driving. But it wasn't a brilliant game.

GW: There was the novelty factor. It was new and unique, it was an experience more than a game – people played it just to try it out.

AS: *Super Hang On* was absolutely amazing and really took racing. It didn't matter that it was a motorbike – the speed and the feeling of

being there was tremendous.

AC: I'd have to go for *Virtua Racing* – that really showed what could be done with polygons.

GW: When that came out I was working in London and there was an arcade across the road and everyone at lunchtime would just go off there and play four- or eight-player games. It was like that for ages – it was a big deal.

AC: It was just the sheer sensation of racing. And the idea of all the viewpoints helped the game.

GW: From a multi-player perspective this was the first game to really take advantage of the number of seats. Suddenly you were competing with four mates.

What do the panel think is the most important part of a racing game?

AS: Having realistic opponents, not ones where if you clip the grass when

if every time you clipped something you'd have predetermined rules where you could just take your hands off and watch the crash. The whole point about making mistakes is being able to correct them.

RE: And that CPU-controlled opponents aren't too predictable in their driving tactics; I reckon *TOCA 2* deals with this issue particularly well.

CG: To complicate it even more we are writing games, we're not simulating real life and if you do try and make it too close to real life the game players become real rally car drivers and you lose them again.

GW: With *CMR* the simulation was there but the key was to get it to play well.

CG: That's very high on the list in today's market. People aren't going to accept a game which isn't graphically right up there – this counts for any

"When I started playing computer games, I only dreamed of the kinds of games available today."

"A RACER'S GOT TO FEEL LIKE A CAR AND NOT JUST A BUNCH OF POLYGONS. IT HAS TO CONVEY THE WEIGHT OF A CAR."

you're in front and 18 cars all a minute behind you come whizzing past. Now you can play games against real people.

CG: You're right – that's where your adrenaline comes from, the feeling of real competition. For that to happen what's got to be right first and foremost is the handling. You get that right and people then feel that they are in control of the car. You might get behind in the race but you'd think that it was your fault – not the game cheating you.

RE: Yeah, a racer's got to feel like a car and not just a bunch of polygons moving around. It has to convey the weight of a car authentically.

GW: The biggest thing for me was that

game genre really. The interesting thing, especially when you're working on licensed games, is that you're trying to get an authenticity and a realism. With *Rollcage* we've gone for a style and a feel but with *TOCA*?

GW: They've seen the sport, they've seen the cars and they have expectations you have to meet in the best way possible. It has to be as good as possible for them to be sucked in.

RE: It's got to look as close to motor sport looks on TV – that's how people are really used to seeing it.

AS: The graphics are crucial to get you in there and then the game should take over. No matter what game you play

you don't pay too much attention to graphics once you're enjoying the game. These days you can't even get people to play the game.

What did you think when you first saw *Gran Turismo*?

RE: I was just starting work on marketing *TOCA* when I saw the first screenshots and I thought 'Damn'. But in the end it wasn't an issue because *TOCA* made last Christmas and the advent of *GT* just fuelled the whole realistic motor sport craze anyway. But *GT* is spectacular and was a good, well planned exercise that created a new 'wow factor' that the PlayStation needed.

CG: I remember the whole *Rollcage* team watching the replay and applauding it, getting quite excited.

AS: Jawdropping. I couldn't believe what they were doing with the machine. And the great thing was, once you started playing you realised there's a hell of a game underneath it as well.

CW: I picked up the controller and it felt like you were driving a road car. I can imagine this is what it would be like to take a road car round a race track.

Where are racing games going now? Just more and more realism?

CG: You can split games into two groups. For licensed products the

authenticity is what you're after all the time. And then for games like *Wipeout* and *Rollcage* you think 'what's going to give me the fun?' – the 'wow factor'.

GW: Within the simulation area, the realism is getting closer and closer. We took the game (*CMR*) to the Auto Show and one of the guys from the Ford Motorsports team tried it and said: 'Oh my God it's got lift-off oversteer.' All the mechanics are in there. A punter will play it and enjoy it but a driver will start to see all the true-to-life features in it.

CG: One thing I'd like to see more of is the environment influencing the race. Like traffic and things on the side of the tracks. We've got the power now to give the game AI so we should make sure we use it.

RE: Driving in environments you already know comes back to my London idea.

AS: I'm sure people five years ago were asking where they should take games next; when you see *Gran Turismo* it all comes clear.

GW: When I started playing computer games I only dreamed of the kinds of games available today.

AC: I used to think how great it would be to have an arcade machine in the house and now they're 99 quid down the shops.

Chris Gibbs
Job: Managing Director of ATD.
Quote: "I remember the whole *Rollcage* team watching the *Gran Turismo* replay and applauding it, getting quite excited."

Guy Wilday
Job: Producer for *Colin McRae Rally*.
Quote: "One of the guys from the Ford Motorsports team tried *Colin McRae Rally* and said: 'Oh my God it's got lift-off oversteer'."

Richard Eddy
Job: Publicity for *TOCA, Colin McRae Rally* and *TOCA 2*.
Quote: *Gran Turismo* ... created a new 'wow factor' that the PlayStation really needed."

Andy Smith
Job: Editor of *Futuregamer*.
Quote: "No matter what game you play, you don't pay too much attention to graphics once you are actually enjoying the game."

Anderw Collins
Job: Staff Writer, *Essential PlayStation, Official PlayStation Tips*
Quote: "It (*Micro Machines*) was the idea of smacking your mates off the table ... unbeatable.""

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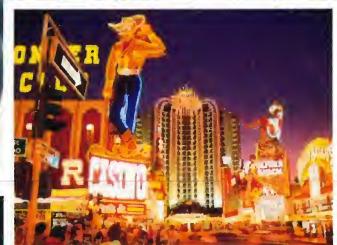
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COMPETITION
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These cars, produced by Kyosho of Japan are what you'd find being raced in remote control competitions, and are a very serious proposition indeed. To give you an idea of just how competitive they are, the Petrol model has a top speed of 52 mph! That's actual speed, by the way, not scale speed. Because of this, we're afraid that no-one under 14 can win this prize – it's that good!

MAX POWER RACING

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The History Of Racing Games

(and what makes a great one)

NIGHT DRIVER

Sporty, nippy and fashionably Japanese.

Gran Turismo

The game was *Pole Position*, perhaps the most influential driving game of them all.

OVER IN JAPAN, ORIENTAL GAMERS PREFER THEIR RPGS AND FIGHTING GAMES. IN THE STATES ITS ALL NBA, NHL, NFL, PGA SPORTS SIM. BUT OVER HERE IN BLIGHTY, WAY AHEAD OF THE REST OF THE PACK IN ANY READER'S POLL, IS THE RACING GAME – BRITAIN'S FAVOURITE GAME GENRE. BAR NONE.

Pink Mappy – Ridge Racer

BIGGER

The History of Racing Games

RACING GAME MADNESS
The autopilot in *Wipeout 2097* that always seems to crash you into the wall immediately after it shuts off.

RACING GAME MADNESS
Driving hundreds of miles down the motorway then pulling into the services for a break and playing a driving game in the arcade.

ANALOGUE ACTION

An essential part of truly enjoying a PlayStation driving game involves the binning of the trusty old digital controller in favour of sexier analogue trickery.

Driving with a conventional D-pad is monumentally artificial if you think about it. Your front wheels are either straight on (D-pad unpressed), or turned a fixed distance left or right with each tiny pad push.

An analogue pad allows you to do every tiny amount of turn from straight on to full lock left or right with a push of the stick. This is much more like real driving where you spin the wheel the more you want to turn. The result is that you can guide your car around corners in one fluid motion (rather than tapping the D-pad to keep it on line) and you can turn farther than before – ideal for snapping the car out of potential spins in *GT*, *TOCA* and *Colin McRae*.

Similarly, a steering wheel is a much more controlled, um, control method, providing you can actually get the blessed thing to stick onto a table AND secure the pedals. If you have the space and patience this is THE way to play racing games.

A The racing game first manifested itself in arcades as cumbersome, mechanical device that owed more to Heath Robinson-type bells and pulleys than it did to silicon and polygons. This was *Top Driver*, a game which featured a wall-paper-like roll of 'track' being swept under a model car which the player could move left and right. Deviate from the track and an appropriate crash SFX was played, drowning out the whirr of the motors and cogs for a second. Shocking stuff.

Far more like the racing games we know and love today was the first all electronic game. It was an Atari game, created in their post-*Pong* heyday, by the name of *Sprint*. *Sprint* allowed two players to play simultaneously via vast bus-like steering wheels on the front of the oversized arcade cabinet. The game was a simple matter of steering primitive blocky F1 cars around simple top-down viewed tracks. The game spawned many home computer rip-offs and an Atari spin-off VCS cartridge, Indy 500.

The racing games first foray into 3D was a similarly Atari VCS creation, *Night Driver*. A black screen (hence

THE RACING GAME'S FIRST FORAY INTO THREE DIMENSIONS WAS NIGHT DRIVER.

RACING GAME MADNESS

Pulling an opponent's joypad out of its port as you go neck and neck into the final corner.

Need For Speed was the original performance car sim.

RACING GAME MADNESS

Cursing the countdown at the beginning of *Gran Turismo* races (which takes all of four seconds) for taking too long.

CLASSIC CARS

OPSM's all time favourite PlayStation rides

Nissan Skyline
Gran Turismo
Built like a bus but with the capacity to move like an excited weasel. Ideal for racing and taking the wife and kids to the zoo.

Pink Mappy
Ridge Racer
Nippy and fashionably Japanese hot-hatch made all the more remarkable by it's frightening paintjob and outlandish name.

Ferrari 355
Need For Speed
Red as plum tomatoes and as fiery as chilli sauce. The decadent but effective choice for the racing connoisseur. With too much money.

RACING MASTERCLASS

Creating the perfect racing game is a simple task as long as certain golden rules are followed. Sure, you want fast, smooth, gorgeous graphics (and perhaps an official licence or endorsement from a star driver) but you also need each of the following more elusive elements in there too.

Collision Detection

An absolutely vital part of any racing game. Collision detection spots if you impact with other cars or scenery. It's the one facet of the game that enables players to feel that the events on-screen are *real*. Bad collision detection allows you to drift through opponents, would allow cars past when you *know* you'd just swerved in front of him to block him and, perhaps worst off all, would send you careering across the track when you were bloody *miles* away from that barrier.

Teacher's pet: *Gran Turismo* – pixel perfect
Class fool: *Impact Racing* – don't worry, just drive through them!

Realistic Opponent AI

Playing a racing game is all about winning. You want to cross the line before any of the CPU-controlled cars and *beat* the game. But what if the game's AI isn't fully formed? What if it

speeded up the CPU cars to match you regardless of how good (or bad) you were? What if you thought you were miles in front when suddenly a car goes speeding past you at a million miles an hour? Suddenly the game is *cheating*. Because it can't create an accurate enough model of how your rival cars should drive it resorts to trickery to give you an exciting race. And how do you feel? Gutted, tricked and you never want to play the stupid game again.

Teacher's pet: *TOCA Touring Car* – they're out to get you
Class fool: *Peak Performance* – where did that car come from?!

Music and sound

A very much underplayed part of driving game design. Music can be a crucial aspect in conveying speed and excitement. *Wipeout 2097* officially certified block rockin' beats, the *Ridge Racer* series mind-pummelling techno, even the widdly-widdly euro rock of the *Formula 1* games, each sells the player a little bit of magic. A little bit of atmosphere that gets the heart racing just that little bit faster. The engines must roar just right. The tyres must squeal authentically and the co-driver and commentator must not sound like samples being

pulled off CD despite being exactly that. Not convinced? Try playing your favourite racer with the sound down.

Teacher's pet: *Rage Racer* – fierce techno for a fierce game
Class fool: *Gran Turismo* – you sure that Ash soundtrack works?

Handling (feel)

The most elusive of all driving game assets. It's possible to spend months developing your 3D engine, perfecting your scenery, modelling your car then bringing all three together so that Monaco (say) moves past your shiny F1 motor smoothly and quickly. However, without proper handling and feel you've got a picture of a car in the middle of the screen and lots of polygon scenery gliding past it. You're not *on* the track. You're not *really* driving. It doesn't *feel* like a car. You don't want to play this.

Teacher's pet: *Gran Turismo* – blissfully responsive controls
Class fool: *Penny Racers* – NOT driving

RACING GAME MADNESS

Driving the wrong way round the test track in *Gran Turismo* because you've realised that it fools the three lap counter and you can clock up a higher speed.

RACING GAME MADNESS

The carwash in *Gran Turismo*. Extra shiny shiny car, ta.

'Night') was home to two columns of flickering white posts, which became further apart the further down the screen they came. At the base of the screen was the 'car' which was steered left and right between them. As if that wasn't exciting enough further excitement could be added with a flick of the 'game option' switch, enabling chunky cat representations to occasionally slide down among the poles. These could either be dodged, or, if you were bored, deliberately flattened to the accompaniment of a blood-curdling electronic shriek.

The next big step was yet another Atari creation – only this time with the actual coding being taken care of by an infant Namco. The game was *Pole Position*, perhaps the

POLE POSITION COMBINED THE 3D EFFECT WITH BRIGHT, COLOURFUL, REALISTIC GRAPHICS AND ADDED OPPONENTS TO RACE AGAINST.

most influential driving game of them all. It combined the 3D effect with bright, colourful 'realistic' graphics. It added opponents to race against and, perhaps most importantly of all, it was an actual driving 'sim' – albeit a terminally primitive one. Once this 3D precedent was set countless other games sprang forth. Perhaps most famous (and most copied) was Sega's *Outrun*, pushing the 16-bit arcade tech-

nology to its sprite-shifting limits, scaling both rival cars and rolling chunks of scenery towards the player swiftly and smoothly.

After a few years of multifarious and highly bland Outrun rip-offs the racing game discovered the polygon. The first polygonal driving game – and with a good shout at being the first polygonal game – was *Stunt Car Racer* for the Amiga. Gone were the bright colours, detail and speed of the sprite-pushers and instead huge slabs of dull angular track and sky took their place. On paper – and to the eyes of the less imaginative – it was a step backwards but the polygon scenery, no matter how primitive, gave the game a 3D solidity, far more real than any cartoon depiction of car and track could ever be. It was universally accepted as a classic.

The less powerful 16-bit consoles had to make do with the likes of *Ayrton Senna's GP* (Sega MegaDrive) *Nigel Mansell Grand Prix* (SNES) and, better than the pair, the still brilliant *Super Mario Kart*

RACING GAME MADNESS

Gran Turismo's madly speeded up UK PAL arcade mode.

Pole Position 2; at the time we couln't believe it.

Mini
Felony 11-79
Act out your dearest Italian Job dreams. A sixties classic beamed into a contemporary Japan riddled with scenery to smash.

Porsche Boxster
Porsche Challenge
The classic hairdresser's car provides a neat turn of speed and, as an added bonus looks exactly the same from both ends.

Subaru Impreza
Colin McRae Rally
Another family motor masquerading as a far sportier model. Beneath that sales rep skin lies a monster. If it's good enough for Colin...

LET'S OFF-ROAD

Operating on the periphery of the driving game is the ever swelling number of games that take their motors off the tarmac and into the trees. Often quite literally.

These rally games demand a different type of reaction and skill, one where a slip of the D-pad doesn't result in a loss of speed but a full end-over-end smash up.

V-Rally
The daddy of them all. However, too twitchy handling scares off all but the most persistent grapplers. If you can cope the pure rewards are obvious.

Rally Cross
An initially highly rated but really slightly shabby American effort whose cars look (and handle) like giant roller skates. Which is clearly not good.

Total' Drivin
It's a bit of a curio this one. While there's plenty of tarmac on offer there are frequent dirt tracks to tussle with too. This is one of our favourites.

Test Drive 4x4
An absolutely shocking mess. The cars look like bread vans and they handle like them too. Low-speed van racing anyone. Quite, quite pointless.

Colin McRae Rally
The king of the off-road racers. Currently unequalled in terms of handling and feel. And there's shedloads of tracks and cars too.

[1] We don't care what you say. No racing game has ever really bettered *Ridge Racer*. [2] Unless, of course you count *Sprint* or *Super Sprint*.

(SNES). However, despite great success, technically it was realised that polygons were indeed the right way to go.

The game to really make the next generation leap was Sega's seminal *Virtua Racer*. Yes the polygons were only shaded (texturing polygons was too great a hardware demand at the time), yes the scenery was dull but *Virtua Racer*'s Model 1 arcade board had the power to shift tens of thousands of polygons around the screen in a trice. Add to this the first instance of a force feedback steering wheel and you've got a global arcade hit.

As Sega began work on a sequel Namco released a rival. That game was *Ridge Racer*, the first textured polygon racer and, to the millions of arcade players around the world, it was quite simply the best racing game ever created. Unfortunately it didn't rule the roost for long as attention was drawn away by Sega's *Virtua Racing* successor – *Daytona USA*. While *Daytona Racing* was a far more simplistic affair than the complex power-sliding demanded in *Ridge*, it did have arguably better graphics and – in arcades that could afford the machines – a 16-player link-up game. *Ridge Racer* quickly fought back with a

two-player (plus rear view mirror) game, *Ridge Racer 2*, but by then *Daytona* was cleaning up.

The battle was to continue onto the new 32-bit consoles but here, thanks to better hardware and infinitely superior programming skill Namco's exquisite *Ridge Racer* conversion (complete with bizarre NegCon analogue steering device) soundly trounced Sega's shambollically rough *Daytona* effort.

Four short years (and countless *Ridge* wannabes) later driving fanatics are tucking into *Gran Turismo* – the PlayStation's best racer yet. However, given the genre's long and varied history, OPSM reckons that the best is yet to come.

EXTRA HAZARDS INCLUDE DEAD-ENDS AND THERE'S EVEN A SLALOM SPIN THROUGH SOMEONE'S GARDEN IN THE

[1] *Colin Mcrae Rally* – the game that dared to match *Gran Tusismo*. [2] Almost. Despite what anybody says, is by far and away the champ.

THE NEXT BIG PLAYSTATION RACERS

Early '99 will see the release of a succession of racing sequels.

In France Infogrames are working on the successor to the fine (and recently Platinumed *V-Rally*). *V-Rally 2* is rumoured to retain the frighteningly twitchy handling of the original game that made it both exciting and damned tricky in equal measure. An all-new bevy of cars and an even larger number of tracks are promised. Of course.

Gran Turismo fans will be counting the days to the release of the currently hush hush *GT2*, possibly even in time for Christmas in Japan if rumours prove to be true (we'll keep you posted). *GT2* aims to conquer every facet of motor racing this time around by including off-road rally-style tracks and cars in addition to a new selection of tarmac tracks and cars.

And there are even whispers of a successor to Gremlin's *Motorhead*, the excellent future-

racer which, like *GT2*, also takes at least some of the action off-road. *Colin McRae* – you've got a lot to answer for.

And we haven't even touched upon the exciting prospect of *Ridge Racer Type 4* (see page 14 for details), potentially the greatest racer THE WORLD HAS EVER SEEN.

Expect all of these games to go head-to-head in the shops (and in *OPSM*) in the new year. We're looking forward to it.

COMPETITION
WIN!

These cars are around £200 each if you buy them in the shops, and feature differential gears, fully functional shocks, semi-inflated tyres and quick charghing Nicad batteries. They also hit to scale speeds equivalent to their real life counterparts. In short, they're smart.

Codemasters®

The Gamester Dual Shock Wheel is the first to create fantastic rumble effects from Dual Shock coded games [now including Platinum *TOCA 1*, as well as *TOCA 2*]. You can actually feel every bump, knock, collision and spin as the wheel shakes and vibrates in your hands.

6 Top Of The Range Tamiya Remote Control TOCA Cars

+

6 Gamester Steering Wheels
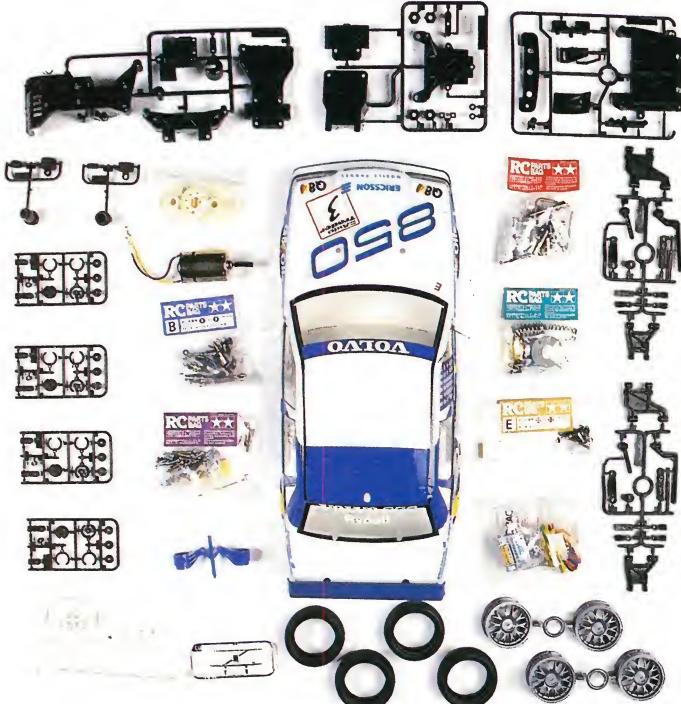
TO CELEBRATE THE RELEASE OF *TOCA 2* CODEMASTERS HAVE TEAMED UP WITH GAMESTER TO OFFER SIX LUCKY WINNERS ONE GAMESTER DUAL SHOCK STEERING WHEEL PLUS ONE VERY GROWN-UP R/C CAR. THAT'S £250 WORTH OF RACING FUN EACH. THE CATCH? YOU NEED TO ANSWER THIS...

QUESTION:

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IS IT;

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B) BRITISH TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP
C) BRITISH TOURING CAR CIRCUIT

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|PREPLAY

A SNEAK PEEK AT THE GAMES ALMOST READY FOR THE SHELVES. IS IT LOOKING GOOD OR IS IT LOOKING TERRIBLE? PSM:RACING SPECIAL GIVES YOU THE LOWDOWN.

RollCage

Faster than *Wipeout*, bigger than *Destruction Derby*. It's no surprise that Psygnosis have big things in mind for their latest racer.
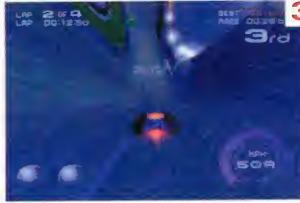
[1] Don't expect a slow countdown. [2] Use the sides. [3] Each car leaves a light trail. [4] The cliffs are very useful for overtaking. [5 – 6] The camera switches to the best view possible. [7] Top snow action.

When the PlayStation was first launched the huge sales could be put down to two games, an arcade perfect copy of *Ridge Racer* and the hugely impressive *Wipeout*. Just 12 months later *Wipeout 2097* found its way onto the shelves winning critical praise from anyone who played it. With this success in mind you would have thought Psygnosis would have churned out sequels one after the other but they've shied away from this... until now... almost... until *Rollcage*.

Their latest franchise set for PlayStation stardom is *Rollcage*. Hailing from little-known developers Attention To Detail this reversible car-chaser looks set to give Psygnosis more than a little success. To find out more about this most promising of games we spoke to Stuart Tilley, lead producer of *Rollcage*, to get the inside gen on one of the hottest games of the new year.

To get the ball rolling, we asked him to describe his game: "No

Rules Racing - the whole idea is to drive incredibly fast in an explosive race where the cars are totally indestructible. If you crash and spin in the air it doesn't matter, just get back on line and hit the throttle, even if you land upside-down these cars will keep going."

Right, so we've got the basic idea of the game; it's a game set in the future, featuring ultra-fast racing and huge, continent-destroying weapons; sounds like the natural successor to *Wipeout* to us. "For all the respect we have for *Wipeout*, we branded it a swear word in the ATD office for the duration of development. We knew it would be compared to *Wipeout* so we have made every effort to deliver a completely different gameplay experience.... The freedom to drive the cars off the track and all over the terrain coupled with the cars being able to flip over and keep going gives and intense 'rough and tumble' appeal."

When you first get a glimpse of the "cars" you notice just how huge their wheels are, dwarfing the body. This might look a rather frivolous addition, one for the design

[1] The lighting effects are damn fine with great light trails as the missiles blast by. [2] The shoulder buttons fire the weapons. [3] More fantastic lighting effects. [4] And you thought the previous shot was impressive. [5] Exploding buildings are a great way of getting a few yards between you and the following pack, fie away and watch them tumble. [6] Not all buildings can be destroyed, some refuse to be blown up. [7] Rock ahoy!

THE PRODUCER TALKS

Stuart went on for ages about the game that he so obviously loves, and well, it's his job to talk about it... so we asked some questions, nipped off down the pub and found this when we came back.

This is quite a different look at the racing genre. What other games, if any, did you look at when you developed the idea?
Sega Rally is one of our favourite racers, but inspiration for the game has come from so many different sources. We looked at nearly every race game in existence (with *Hard Drivin'* in the arcades being a notable title) However, it was playing with a remote control car that ignited the spark to have the cars flip over in-game.

Racing games often die on their two-player games. Tell us about the multiplayer aspects of *Rollcage* please.
We have always felt that the multiplayer aspects of the game are crucial to the long term enjoyment of a race game, an aspect in which Sega rally shone. Nothing beats the rush of racing head-to-head with the person sitting next to you, it was with this in mind that we designed some tracks especially for two players. Using horizontal or vertical split-screen, two players can compete not only on the 10 tracks from the league competitions but also on 3 specially designed multiplayer tracks (and also some extra special hidden tracks). The *Rollcage* engine also ensures that the action keeps up at 30-fps even on split screen with all the effects and action of the league competitions. Players who look hard enough will find the four deathmatch arenas hidden in the game...

What's your favourite bit of the game - which course, weapon and so on?
The most enjoyable thing about *Rollcage* is the extreme situations that occur. For example, shooting down a floating advertising board and driving underneath it just before it explodes on the floor, and then being pushed forward by its explosive force, like a surfing a wave. Or taking all the speed pads on the ceiling of one of Neoto City's tunnels and then flying along upside-down and airborne, above your opponents with all the skyscrapers passing you by pointing downward! Often, members of the team stay behind late at work just to play the game!

What can you tell us about this rumoured 60 frames a second, *Gran Turismo* style mode?
...erm...don't know what your talking about...honest 'guv....

You've almost finished *Rollcage* – what is next up for Attention To Detail?
Rollcage releases in March. Later in the year Gremlin will release our next game *Gabrielle: The Dark Angel* which will soon be making its way onto PlayStation. We are also developing a sports game based on the Olympic Games in the year 2000 for PlayStation, PC, Dreamcast and N64. This will be something VERY special. And of course there were many ideas that we did not have time to incorporate into Rollcage... watch this space...

students, but from the first time you land roof up yet keep belting along at 500kmh they prove to be a great addition to the game's style. To get the game to feel right the team spent a lot of time working on getting the physics of the car spot on, making sure everything felt right: "The game boasts the most realistic car vehicle physics of any racing game," Stuart said, "we built a completely accurate model of a car, taking into account most of the factors that affect the behaviour of a real vehicle."

This is all well and good but surely the idea of the game is not to be like real cars, after all you're supposed to be able to knock down building after building as you blast through their foundations at 500 kmh - not that realistic is it? "It was obvious that we would have to tweak some of the values to make *Rollcage* a playable racing game... For example, the cars have more grip than any real-world car (allowing them to perform powerslides at 600kmh!) It was the honing and tweaking of this physics system that makes the car so worthwhile to drive."

Once the team had sorted the physics of the car they thought they would have a lot of problems slotting the inverted car idea into the game but this proved to be simple. Where they did have to work hard was with the camera angle: "This was very difficult to get right. As you can leave a track, drive upside down or get shot into the air by a missile, we were very conscious that the player could easily get disorientated. It has taken nearly a year of tweaking to get the game camera right."

All this fancy Dan physics would be bloody useless without some

[1] All the missiles are auto-lock on so you can fire 'em and forget 'em. [2] Squint and it looks like *Pole Position*.

sterling tracks to scream around. Fortunate then, that the *Rollcage* developers included cracking courses in spades. They start off simple enough with wide open circuits crammed with enough debris to make even the most simple Sunday stroll in the sun a reason for serious safety issues. To add to some very twisty courses the track designers have added the usual variety of trackside details from palm trees to piazzas but this wasn't enough for them they wanted more... they wanted great

LAP 1 OF 4
LAP 00:01:26

KPH 232

LAP 4 OF 4
LAP 60:10:15
BEST
RACE 01:27:96
2nd

LAP 2 OF 4
LAP 00:00:36
BEST
RACE 00:32:26
4th

More explosions, death and mayhem. What else do you want from a top quality racing/action game. Result

LAP 3 OF 4
LAP 00:14:36
BEST
RACE 01:01:66
2nd

KPH 473

6th

339

Keep driving long enough and you can watch the sun rise. Now would that be a top weapon. Hmm... Sun Deathray.

LAP 3 OF 4
LAP 00:16:15
5th

spaceships which force you through the course at top speed or huge meteorites which crash into the course: "We saw *Armageddon* and were inspired," jokes company MD, Chris Gibbs.

Rollcage proves to be a rather generous beast when it comes to the number of tracks in the game. To start with there are 11 main courses which can be raced in single- or two-player game. On top of these there are four deathmatch courses, specifically designed to include as much face to face blasting as possible. And if these

weren't enough there's a practice course and a further three time attack circuits.

Like certain other futuristic racers which ATD don't like us talking about, the *Rollcage* racers come crammed with ferocious weapons. Our favourite was the superb Wormhole. Not only did this vastly improve your chances of winning the race, it looks bloody marvellous too – a great shimmering effect. Other greats include a missile which locks onto the weak points in trackside structures, covering the course in

debris, and a superb Timewarp missile which drags the car in front of you backwards until they are behind you.

3
LAP 1 OF 4
LAP 00:03:93
BEST
RACE 00:03:93
6th

MPH 109

4
LAP 1 OF 4
LAP 00:29:26
BEST
RACE 00:29:26
3rd

KPH 379

5
6th

6

1

233

2
6th

[1 - 5] Death, destruction, and general carnage, *2000AD* style. [6] Get too close to the explosions and you're blinded for a second or two.

[1] Look out for the arrows if you lose your sense of direction. **[2]** Ah, beautiful trees. **[3 – 4]** The symbols on the bottom left are your weapons. **[5]** A welcome inclusion of the colour green. **[6]** Different road surfaces effect the traction of the cars.

[1] It's really kicking off here, keep out of it. **[2]** Firing a weapon is very satisfying, just make sure they hit. **[3]** Turn the page, it's easier to read that way. **[4]** Hmmm... this doesn't look too clever. **[5]** When you go through the tunnels watch out for power ups on the roof.

To finish off perhaps the greatest collection of weapons since *Quake*, ATD have introduced a system where you can double the effect of each weapon if you have two loads simply by pressing both shoulder triggers. This guarantees serious injury to any other cars foolish enough to get in the way.

Oh, and did we mention all the huge tunes included on the soundtrack? Stuart reckons the tunes could be bigger than any other soundtrack: "We are just tying up all the loose ends on a deal which will give the game about 15 top drum 'n' bass and dance tunes by many very well known artists." We heard the soundtrack and it's a belter – we'd love to tell you what is on it but the tracklist is currently shrouded in secrecy.

So, is *Rollcage* worth saving your Christmas money for? Well, it's going to take someone with the patience of a saint not to spend up before the March release but it should be worth the wait. Now, what about *Wipeout 3* then?

Andrew Collins

PSM OPINION

⊕ POINTS
- Fantastic soundtrack. Bangin' choons.
- Huge course variety with one-player and Deathmatch courses crammed in.

⊖ POINTS
- Can be confusing if you lose control.

⚠ ADVANCE WARNING
The version we've played was damn near complete and looks great. With the 20 courses it looks like there's going to be a lot of gameplay on the shiney disc. This could be one of the big hits of next year with top racing action. Just you watch.

Official UK PlayStation Racing Special

43 MPH

Driver
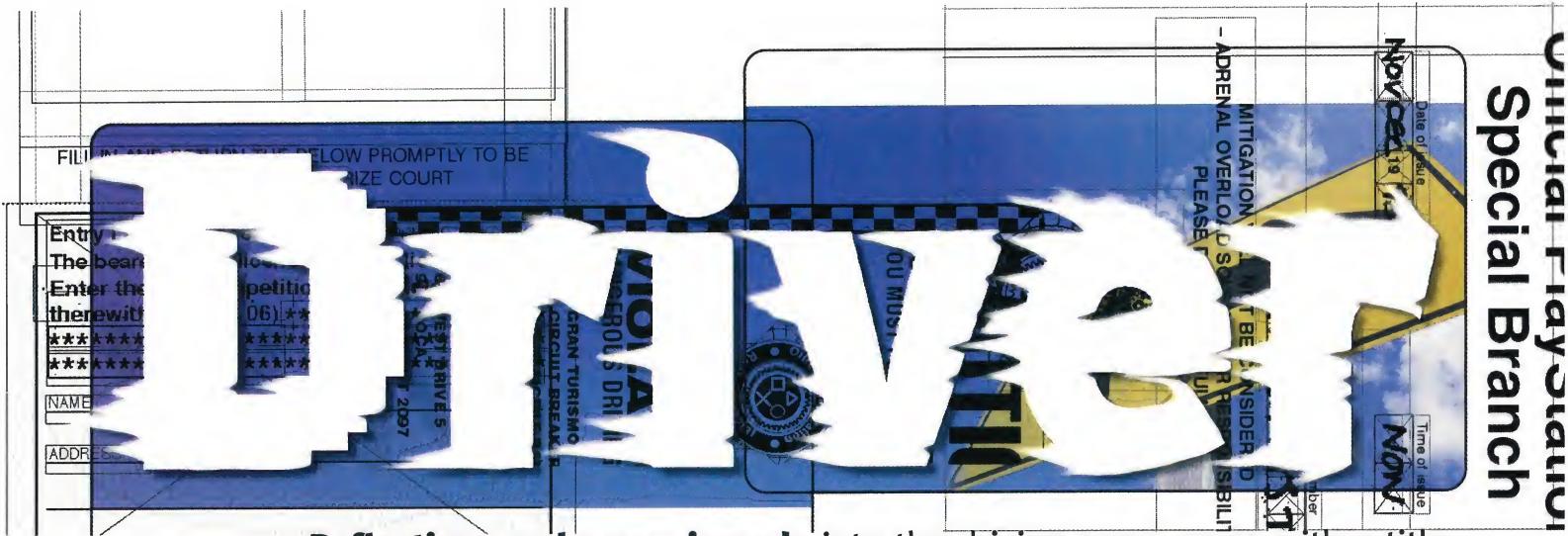
Reflections make new inroads into the driving game genre with a title based on '70s crashploitation movies. Crashploitation?

With a 14-year track record, a 40-strong team and two massive game series behind them (*Shadow of The Beast* and *Destruction Derby1 & 2*), Reflections already cast a large shadow in the games industry. But as founder Martin Edmonson points out, the company is not sitting on its laurels, and it was while working on the original *Destruction Derby* that the idea for *Driver* was first mooted. Says Edmonson: "The actual inspiration came from playing around at the cross roads in *DD1* and thinking it would be good to enable the player to drive across real junctions complete with traffic lights. This led to the idea of simulating car chases in real cities, since car chases in films have always been popular." Who would have thought that such a simple idea would have been such hard work? The game's human resource count adds up to a full-on 20 months of development time, 6300 man days and around 57,000 man hours across both versions.

The game's aim is to bring to life all the car chases that Hollywood has given us over the years and then let us join in. The game is also, thankfully, set in the 70s, with lumpen, tank-like cars; hunks of steel belching out sun smothering fumes. So many of the racing games at the moment feature silky, Evian-sipping cars that mince around like Wayne Sleep in silk slippers and soon these will be the only petrol-driven vehicles in existence, so hurrah for time travel. The team have given the cars handling dynamics that, says industry mogadon mag *Edge*, "are an astonishing feature, and easily challenge

Gran Turismo's level of realism." As there are collision points placed all over the car, those lush crash scenes we play these games for are set to take on an extra dimension too.

The pleasure gleaned from car game crashes has been noted by Reflections and they have tried to include as much detail as possible as well as all manner of reference to Hollywood influences: garbage is stacked at the end of alleys, hub caps fly off your wheels and your car rocks with direction changes. On top of this there is a director facility which we asked Martin Edmonson to explain: "The chase is automatically filmed, and then as it is replayed you are able to stop and insert, or edit the camera. These can be fixed

We don't know about you, but we're gagging for this game to get a release.

[1 – 4] Handily stacked cardboard boxes at the ends of alley ways capture the brilliant late '70s car chases of Starsky and Hutch and the recent resurgence of ads in homage to the same.

[1 – 7] The multiple collision points across the skin of the car make for added realism and spectacular crashes. This, along with realistic settings and the promised good physics model and handling should make for a game create a whole new genre of car games... as will the editing facilities which are now so obviously absent from *Gran Turismo*.

position, moving, focus change, locked to cars, in-car, fixed or moving point of interest – basically anything you've seen in a film – like low level shots down the back alley 'Starsky and Hutch' style. If you can't be bothered to set up cameras on some of the shots, you can ask it to suggest one, or get it to auto direct the entire chase."

The director option is an add-on and it isn't a necessary part of the mission-based game where your tasks range from tailing gang-land bosses to picking up heist merchants and generally being the meanest and coolest driver in whichever city you're 'at'. There are

four locations, all of which contain 30km of roads and around 150,000 buildings. The job of mapping the cities was massive and wasn't helped by Reflections' thirst for detail. Two game designers were sent off to San Francisco, New York, Miami and Los Angeles to collect hours of digital video footage and take thousands of photographs. Driving round the cities the pair had two cameras, one pointing forward for a better 3D view of the surroundings and another camera with a high shutter speed pointing out to the side to get the textures right.

The cities were laid out using road maps and although there has been some artistic licence, the roads are pretty much where they are in real life, as are the key buildings. The game's verisimilitude is bolstered by the inclusion of a certain amount of AI for the civilians. They follow the rules of the road, stop and indicate at lights, indicate to overtake but keep to the speed limit, even, occasionally, have accidents.

The game isn't released until March 1999 but looks set to be the next standard bearer for the PlayStation. It will also be interesting to see where the game goes next, Reflections like doing sequels and it would be a shame to drive off into the distance after just one outing – who knows where this could lead.

Simon Kirrane

Light-sourcing in the game has taken up a lot of the team's time as they try to capture the reality of cars.

PSM OPINION

⊕ **POINTS**

- Aimed at the racer.
- New gameplay elements.
- Top quality graphics.
- Cinematic replays.

⊖ **POINTS**

- We still have to see the game at work.
- There are a lot of chase games already.

❶ **ADVANCE WARNING**

The amount of chase games that have appeared on the PlayStation over the last 18 months is huge and not many have been any good... If *Driver* can break the mould then we'll all be happy, if it falls in line though it will be yet another let down.

45 MPH

MAX Power Racing

Bouncing through forests, screaming through deserts and slicing through tundra's... no, you're not a mincing queen, you're a top driver. Alright?
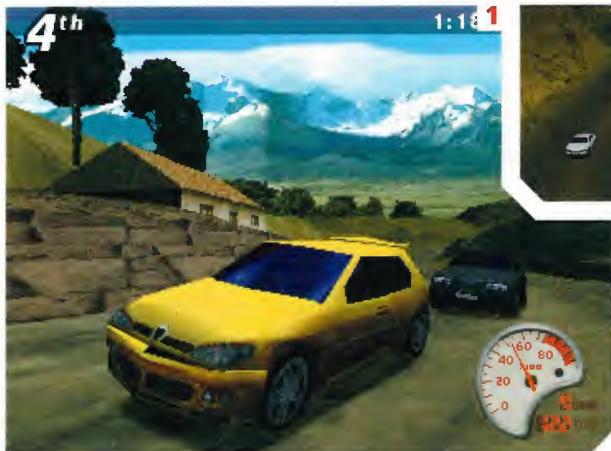
[1] Ride wild in your Peugeot, now stop, close your eyes and try to spell Peugeot. Hard isn't it? [2] It looks like some kind of valley of death, but it's not. [3] A blue car, a tight corner and some reflections.

Eutechnyx, Infogrames program team, aren't shy when it comes to racing games (their first effort, *Total Drivin'* is reviewed on page 96) and their latest driving title, due out this december, looks set to take the racing game back to basics, that is, travelling at very high speeds in cars and not worrying too much about dampers or suspension.

The major feature of the game is that it's an arcade racer, a game for the purist who likes powersliding around corners rather than spending half an hour

> IF YOU CRASH A CAR AT ANY SORT OF SPEED IT'S USUALLY A WRITE-OFF. . . THAT'S NOT MUCH FUN

choosing the kind of wood you want the dash to be made out of.

Nevertheless, there are around 20 variable elements to the cars that allow you to tailor your car to the way you drive, so you can get a deeper level of enjoyment from the game without having to spend too much time away from the track. And the aim of all this driving is to compete in a full season's racing

and win the Car Constructor's Championship in whatever level of car you are racing in. There are 24 cars, split into four different categories (GTI Amateur, GTI Pro, Performance Amateur and Performance Pro). The reason for the split was so that the level of performance and challenge stayed true to reality – an entry level GTi car would never keep up with a

[1 – 6] As you can imagine many of the development team have been sent out, cameras at the ready, to capture the look and feel of the circuits they have covered and there is no small amount of excitement concerning the graphics here in the office. Added to this the cars all look the part and, with the fully-reflective surfaces look set to compete with the best racers out there.
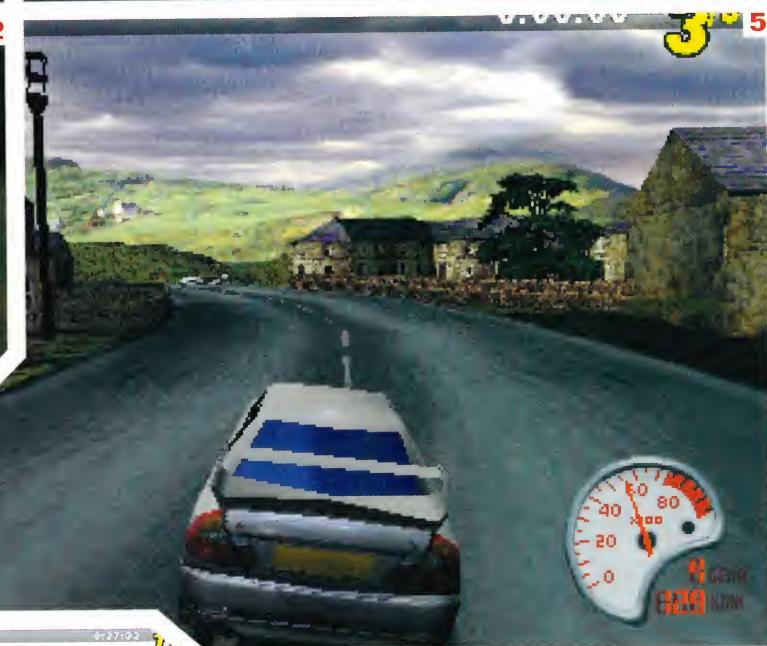
PAST WATERFALLS AND ANCIENT TEMPLES, THROUGH MIST-SHROUDED RIVER BASINS...

highly tuned performance model for example.

The game has you hurtling around exotic courses, past waterfalls and ancient temples, through mist-shrouded river basins and over arid desert plains. And, of course, this is also part of the plan – for example the mist uses variable vertical density so that it is a fine mist that gradually envelops the car at the river bed, reducing visibility to nil and then fades out as you race up the other side of the valley. The environment is also helped by the inclusion of realistic night-time driving and jungle vistas with vines hanging down over the front of your windscreen.

There has also been an effort to include as much realism as possible with the cars. "We spent a lot of time speaking with companies such as Marcos, Toyota and Mitsubishi to ensure we represented their cars properly" says Kev Shaw, Eutechnyx PR manager and, after gleaning the manufacturers specs, performance

data and stats the cars were designed to have all-over reflective surfaces that would take and show any damage incurred.

There had to be a accommodation made between the realism of the cars and the fact that we all want to play good games. As Kev added, "A lot of time was spent ensuring we achieved the right balance of realism and playability when it came to the damage effects. In reality, if you crash a car at any sort of speed it's usually a write-off. However, that's not much fun in a game, so we compromised a little to include damage that

would punish the player for driving badly but not result in him being unable to complete the race. That was probably the toughest part of the game's development."

The hi-res game has been a tough job all round for Eutechnyx and in the nine months of development it has seen a team of 20 kept busy, but the team did manage to speed things up considerably with the use of Mapper, a system which applies texture maps directly to the meshes. Other routines were developed too but the team reluctant to discuss those.

With good sponsors (Dunlop, NGK, Castrol and Ferodod....), the programming methods and good communication with the manufacturers the team appear to have covered all the bases to ensure a highly playable game **Simon Kirrane**

The talk of the town in racing games is light-sourcing and good replays...

PSM OPINION

⊕ POINTS
- Full-on collision points.
- Reliable damage representation.
- Good handling.
- High level of detail.
- Realistic night races.

⊖ POINTS
- Too much design, too little game?

❶ ADVANCE WARNING

Our only major worry is that there could be too much emphasis on how the game looks and not on how it works. Our version handled OK and looked smart enough for release but there are doubts about the full version and whether it can live up to the competition of *Gran Turismo*, and the imminent release of *Ridge Racer 4*

Official UK PlayStation Racing Special

47 MPH

PlayTest

[1] Red means stop, green means go. Very fast indeed. [2] Plenty of argie-bargie action takes place. Nudges are fine, but drive dangerously and you're docked points. [3] Those race options in full. [4] Nice sky. [5] Replay mode, not a nasty smash! [6] Chase cam'. [7] Life on the open road. [8] Oops.

Toca 2

Rumbling around Silverstone in a Volvo may sound rather dull. **But just imagine it with 280 BHP** squeezed under the bonnet and things start to look up.

TOURING THE CARS

Team Honda Sport. 290 bph on tap, odd colour scheme.

TOURING THE CARS

Audi's A4. Nothing like the one your dad drives.

Around about the third race in this year's Formula One season the conversation down the pub of a Sunday evening was starting to get rather predictable. "Who won the Grand Prix, then, eh?" "Oh, a first and second for McLaren, again."

It was about that time that motorsport fans started looking elsewhere for their thrills. Sure, the season hotted up later in the year, when Ferrari finally managed to get its braking system together, and Schuey started to perform, but those early races were really rather dull. Languid, even.

And so it didn't take long before some profound knowledge started circulating: "Hey, you should really check out the Touring Car racing on Grandstand come Saturday afternoon – it's a hoot." And, indeed, a 'hoot' is a rather apt description for sixteen saloon cars that've had tens-of-thousands of pounds' worth of suped-up engine, gear system and suspension crammed into them, chasing each other around shortish circuits, occasionally knocking eachother off the track. Oh yes, a hoot indeed.

The Touring Car Championship is motor racing as it should be, not some media circus where everybody knows the result before the starting lights have winked out. Sold? Good, then read on.

New and old fans of Touring Car racing should have a go at *TOCA* – the original Codemasters release that featured such competition on the PlayStation. Many of you probably have. That, too, is something of a 'hoot'.

The Renault Laguna above is just as easy as the Volvo to crash, especially in the wet. 290 bph means mucho power to those wheels.

With this second game, the Codies have attempted to bring more than just Touring Car racing to a game about, um, Touring Cars. Indeed, there's provision, now, for driving a raft of different vehicles around the country's

"HEY, YOU SHOULD REALLY CHECK OUT THE TOURING CAR RACING ON GRANDSTAND ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON - IT'S A HOOT."

50 MPH

[1] Chichanes – not easy in the wet. Or anytime, in fact. Approach slow, then hit the power as you exit.
[2] Probably the easiest view from which to drive. [3] Coo, look at that cool rain-on-screen effect. [4] Hurrah, he's managed to land it on the roof again. That'll cost.

BEAT THAT

Car:	Nissan Primera
Course:	Alpine Climb
Time:	1:39:01

It might be one of the extra courses but this is perhaps the best track to test just how good you really are. It's a little tough.

TOURING THE CARS

The Vauxhall Vecta – and not a sales rep in sight. Thankfully.

TOURING THE CARS

A Volvo S40 Sport – not to be confused with an aged 340.

many race circuits, including AC Superblowers (Cobras, basically), Jaguar XJ220s, TVR's concept Speed 12s and even the three-wheeled Grinnall Scorpions, like the one that Roger Cook drives around our neck of the woods. But more about this later.

Also new is a tweaked graphics engine, that makes the game look a bit smarter, but not much, and which speeds the frame rate up – Codemasters now claims a rate of 60 fps, compared with 30 for the original release. And that boosted rate means smoother, faster graphics – something we like very much when it comes to racing games. These graphics, it's important to mention, run in hi-res mode, rather than the dowdy-old low-res of the original game. Additionally, there's a new battle mode of play, which basically means you drive around the track the wrong way while trying to avoid on-coming traffic (like no one didn't do that in the original game anyway – or any other racing game, for that matter), and you can now link up no less than four players in certain race modes, with two players/TV in split-screen. Basically, there's just about every type of race to compete in, though most of the time you'll probably be having a quick blast with the Single Race mode, or go for one of the two Championships.

[1 - 2] In the pits, with plenty of damage to fix. Got to change those tires, too – a change is mandatory in feature races.

THERE'S JUST ABOUT EVERY TYPE OF RACE TO COMPETE IN, THOUGH MOST OF THE TIME YOU'LL. . . BE HAVING A QUICK BLAST WITH THE SINGLE RACE MODE.

ROUND 5

[1 - 2] The replay mode, though visually impressive, is not a patch on that featured in *Gran Turismo*. [3 - 4] It does, however, give you a chance to see where you went wrong.

TOURING THE CARS

The Ford Mondeo – another 290 bph monster machine.

Other improvements include more tracks, twice as many in fact, with foreign circuits included for International events. Plus, there's more commentary. As well as Tiff Needel's comments on the courses, the championship positions and the like, we've now got race commentary from our pit teams, telling us when to pit in, how we're doing and occasionally asking us if we're okay after a nasty smash. The car models have

all been reworked, too, with the significant advancement of transparent windows - now, for the first time, you can actually see the other drivers in their cars as they're thrown about their cockpits, not that you'll have much time to admire the view, as you fight against being thrown about yourself.

That's about it for the major differences between *TOCAs 1* and *2*, so let's take a look at the game to be played. Right then, the Championships... The TOCA Championship is the proper Touring Cars one, though it differs from the first TOCA game because the 1998 Season Rules are slightly different. Each of the 13 events consists of two stages (races, in other words) - a short, 'sprint' race, and a long, 'feature' race. For each race you're allowed just one lap for qualifying (rather than three, like last year), and during the long race you have to make one pit stop for tyres during the mid-section of the race. It's pretty vital that you have achieve a decent qualifying time for the shorter of the races, because they're over before you know it and you've not got much time for overtaking, especially on some of the narrower courses.

As you go through the season you amass points which count towards your Championship total, though be warned: the game system chucks you out of the Championship if you don't score a requisit number of points during each event, so one duff 'weekend' and

CARD WARS

The Car's The Star
Nissan Primera

Top Speed	
0-60	137 MPH
Weight:	5.4 sec
BHP:	N/A
Price:	297 BHP
	N/A

Handling: Smooth and reliable, this will get the job done.

➕ If you need any evidence it has, at the time of press, won the BTCC. So it *must* be the best car.

➖ Nasty little paint-job and it isn't terribly better than any of the other cars in this category.

TOURING THE CARS

The AC Superblower is a tricky fellow to get hold of.

TOURING THE CARS

Peugeot's new 406, featuring tastful gold paint. Lovely.

DONNINGTON QUALIFYING TIMES

TRY IT ON NOVICE LEVEL AND NO MATTER HOW WELL YOU DO, YOU'RE STOPPED AFTER THE THIRD EVENT.

Left, we're looking down the nose of one of those funny, three-wheeled Grinnall Scorpions. And above, qualifying at the infamous Donnington.

1

TIME 00:01:54
BEST 00:00:00

1/10 lap

3rd Pos

GEAR 3

2

TIME 00:17:65
BEST 00:00:00

1/10 lap

2nd Pos

GEAR 4
098 MPH

3

4

1/10 lap

2nd Pos

TIME 00:09:08
BEST 00:00:00

4

5

[1 – 2] Rapidly approaching the back of a Volvo. You may find yourself doing this regularly on public roads. [3 – 4] More of that Volvo... If Rydell's in it, chances are he's gonna win the race. [5] The replay's 'blimp' view. Ie, the one the sponsors don't like very much.

Crash Bang Wallop
WHAT A PICTURE

2/3 lap
TIME 00:56:52
BEST 00:00:00

16th Pos

GEAR 2
021
Auto Trader

If you really want to get the most out of a crash, drive the wrong way around the track and try to get the other cars to hit your doors.

TOURING THE CARS

Pathetic! It's a little Ford Fiesta. Only a very quick one.

has programmed in a number of cheat modes and bonus tracks that are revealed as you progress – providing you get high-enough points, of course. These bonuses include things such as new driving modes and more cars to race. Fun stuff, and worth the effort.

The other Championship mode is the Support Car series, and it's here that those other, non-Touring cars we mentioned come in. You start off the series with a Ford Fiesta and Formula Ford car, with which you can amass Championship points. Get enough and one of the 'locked' cars is revealed, get yet more points and the other eight-or-so cars become available, with suitable points-margins between each. It's a 'more you play, more you get the play with' system that gives *TOCA 2* added longevity, though there is a fear that the amount of points you need to unlock some of the more powerful cars are so great, that only the most dedicated of games players would ever get there.

TOURING THE CARS

This Lister will go down a Storm. Yes, very poor pun.

it's all over, as with the original *TOCA*. Additionally, you can only go through the full Championship in the harder difficulty settings – try it on Novice level and no matter how well you do, you're stopped after the third event.

As an added incentive for doing well, Codemasters
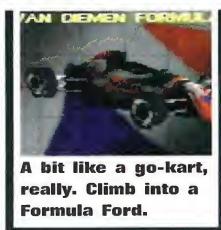
TOURING THE CARS

A bit like a go-kart, really. Climb into a Formula Ford.

2

1/3 lap

1st

TIME
BEST

GEAR 2
030

3

1/4 lap

3rd Pos

TIME 00:11:48
BEST 00:00:00
SPLT 00:00:00

GEAR 4
086

4

2/4 lap

5th Pos

TIME 00:09:08
BEST 00:00:17
SPLT 00:05:04

GEAR 5
101 MPH

TOURING THE CARS

Roger Cook drives one of these. Really. We've seen him.

1 [1] That wet weather really is a pain in low gears – wheels spin, see. [2] Braking early is a must when the rain's coming down – hit the pedal too late and the wheels will lock. [3] And then look what happens. [4] Ouch, get outta here! [5] Yep, 105 mph. [6] Long straights are nice. [7 – 11] Yet more sliding into the gravel pits. The in-car view looks cool, though.
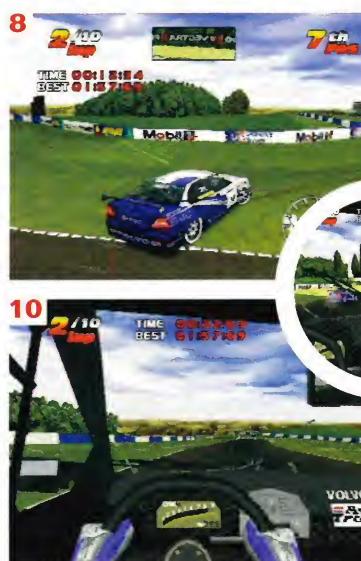
[1 – 2] Check out the rear-view mirror. Essential. [3] The glass is gone, but no worries – less weight. [4] That light-reflecting-off-road effect is cool, not that you get much chance to admire it. [5 –6] It means: go right. Generally best to follow signs.

ALL THE ADDED EXTRAS CERTAINLY MAKE THIS NEW GAME A BETTER AND MORE REALISTIC TITLE TO PLAY.

Still, by bringing this support car challenge to the basic game, Codemasters has opened-up the appeal of *TOCA 2* over the original by giving you something else to go off and play with if you tire of Touring Cars for a while, without you having to get up and change discs entirely. Does this support car business actually work well? Admittedly, it does seem a bit tacked-on to the main game, and the full Touring Car Championship is more fun to play through, but on the plus-side it does give you the chance to drive cars that are more than two-times as powerful as an 'ordinary' Touring Car –

TECHNIQUE

Powersliding

Although it looks flash, powersliding isn't the quickest way to get around a tight corner – you scrub speed off in doing so. Better to brake hard in a straight line, and power out.

that Speed 12 from TVR kicks out more than 700 bph, boys and girls, and that makes for a pretty serious 240 mph supercar.

All the added extras certainly make this new game a better and more realistic title to play when compared to the original, though in pure excitement stakes there's little in it. The two games were compared head-to-head for the purposes of this review, and to be honest, the first game still cuts its generous share of mustard. And baring in mind that *TOCA 1* is now on the Platinum label for just £20, deciding which to buy would have to be a very carefully considered decision. But if money isn't all that important, and you want the best, then

TOURING THE CARS
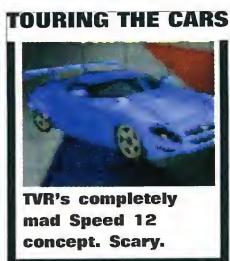
TVR's completely mad Speed 12 concept. Scary.

TOURING THE CARS

The 220 mph XJ200 from Jaguar. Looks better in silver.

[1] Use the rumble strips, it's what they're for. [2] A bonus track – New York [3] And down some steps we go [4 – 6] Off in the Grinnall.

this new release is the one to go for. The guys at Codemasters have gone to an incredible level of effort to now only bring *TOCA 2* up to date with the new season's rules, but they've also added a hell of a lot to the game, and the attention to detail is astonishing - you even get bug-splats on your window screen from the in-car view, for instance.

When compared to other racing games available,

[1] Even though it only has a motorbike engine from a BMW to power it, the Grinnall Scorpion is mighty fast. [2] Handles like a bastard, though, at the first corner of this race everyone, all the CPUs went off the track. Well, near enough all of them. OK, OK, just me. [3] Plenty of driver info, should you be interested.

[1] It's very easy to get into a nasty situation and crash... particularly if you're driving along the course in the wrong direction. [2] Before all the races the cars line up so you can see just how many cars are taking part. You get a lovely widescreen effect too. [3] When you use the in-car view if you push down on the D-pad the 'driver's head' will move to check the mirror. Neat touch. [4] Each track has it's own info box. Look for the top times.

MEET JASON PLATO

We caught up with Jason Plato who drives his Laguna for, deep breath, Nescafé Blend 37 Williams Renault, and left him this questionnaire, which he filled in while our backs were turned... with a rather thick biro too.

Which circuit in the championship is your
a) favourite
Donington Park

b) least favourite, and why?
Knockhill – not technical enough (too slow)

Is there any one circuit or corner that gives you nightmares? Any jinx?
Course not.

Is there too much or too little argie bargie in the BTCC?
It's just about right actually.

What do you think of the relaxing of the argie bargie
rules in the BTCC?
It needed to happen. It's a tough game and (the argie bargie) would go on even if the rules weren't relaxed - so they had to.

How similar is the BTCC Renault Laguna to the road-going version?
It's like comparing a Cessna 140 to a Hawk Fighter jet!

Have you ever driven a road going Laguna around a circuit, how did it compare?
Yes, we do a lot of PR days. The road-going Laguna is great on a track. Very balanced, forgiving and fun to drive fast. A great car.

Sum up your season. What and where were
a) its peaks
Winning at Oulton Park

b) troughs
Two non-finishes at Thruxton.
Did the tussle between your
Swiss team mate Alain Menu and Vauxhall's John Cleland affect you in any way?
No. I thought it was funny!

What are your plans and goals for the 1999 season?
Make a good start to the season, win races and then the championship.

JASON PLATO
NATIONALITY : BRITISH
BORN : OXFORD, 14/10/68
SINGLE
LIVES : OXFORD
1997 CHAMP. PLACING
RENAULT LAGUNA
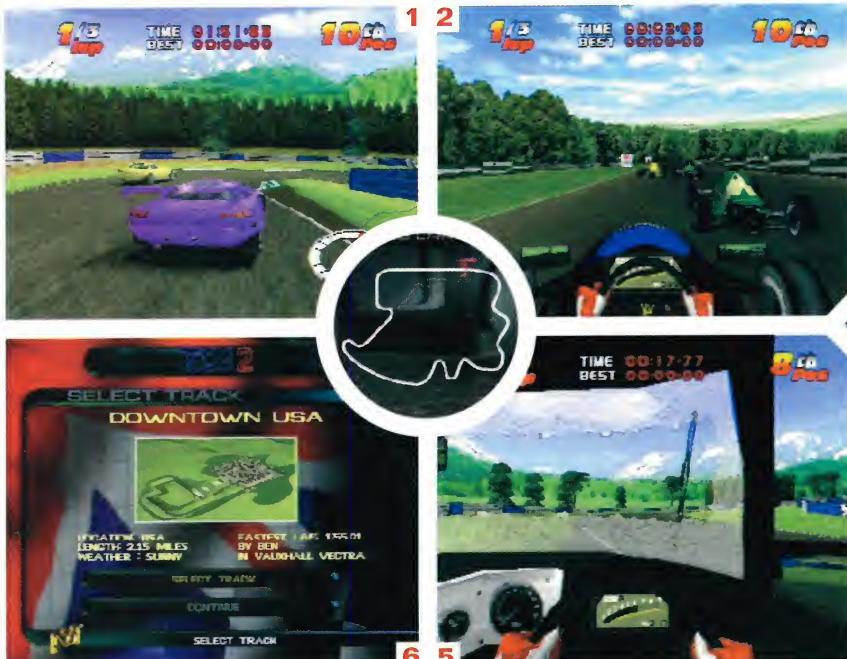
[1] You can choose from a wide variety of vehicles to race. Here are the TVR V12's. [2 – 3] And here are the Formula Ford cars – very fast. [4] The first sign of damage is a cracked windscreen. [5] You can have as many or as few dials as you want. [6] This course looks tricky but is rather easy.

then things get harder. In our mind, *GT* is still the best racing game money can buy, and the off-tarmac experience of *Colin McRae's Rally* is, well, more fun. But we certainly would buy *TOCA 2* over any of the Grand Prix titles out there, and that's saying something, given how well Psygnosis has managed to capture the excitement of Formula One with *F1 97*, let's just not mention their latest outing (OK, see page 70 if you must know). Basically, what it comes down to is preferred style of play – Touring Car racing is grittier and more aggression than Formula One, and this translates well into videogaming. If that gets your juices flowing as a concept, than get hold of *TOCA 2* and you won't be at all disappointed.

Original Score 9   **Paul Pettengale**

VERDICT		SPECS			NOW
■ GRAPHICS:	8	■ *Handling*:	7	While *TOCA 2* is an improvement on the original game, the new cars do feel a bit tacked-on. It's still one of the best racing games out there, and lots of fun.	**9** out of 10
■ GAMEPLAY:	9	■ *Speed*:	8		
■ LIFESPAN:	9	■ *Spills*:	8		

Official UK **PlayStation** *Racing Special*

Colin McRae Rally

If having some Scots geezer screaming "Two left. Don't cut. Rocks," in your ear sounds like a drugs reference out of *Trainspotting* to you, then you haven't quite got the hang of rally driving.

Australia. Deep in the outback. You're driving a souped-up Subaru Impreza doing over 100mph. A cloud of dust plumes out behind you and you've got Colin McRae's co-driver, Nicky Grist, sitting beside you talking you through the course.

"Two right. Caution. Jump," he shouts, straining to be heard over the engine's incontinent rumble. Just in time you start to translate the coded instructions in your head. That means there's a right-hand bend coming up, it's roughly 30 degrees and that you should be careful because there's a... Wooooooaaahhh! ...difficult jump straight after it.

After the car has been righted and put back on the track, and the small crowd of laughing aborigines has dispersed, you take stock of the situation. Luckily you've only lost about four seconds (well, it *is* a game), so

you leap back in the car and set off again, determined to pay more attention to what Nicky says in future.

Colin McRae Rally is a hoot. In places. In other places it's one of the most intensely frustrating, hair-pulling, vicious, vindictive swines of a game you've ever played. But that's simply the difference between screaming through the Australian outback and ploughing through the Swedish snow plains. You see, this is an international game. There are eight parts of the world to travel to

EACH COURSE IS EXTREMELY TOUGH AND CHALLENGING, AND THERE ARE VARIED TERRAINS TO LEARN TO DEAL WITH.

[1 – 2] When negotiating Indonesia's paddy fields it is advisable to stay on the road. **[3]** The Corsican roads are twisting, but at least the Tarmac gives you a good grip. **[4]** A scene from the exciting and noisy intro.

+00:19.57

02:48.66
02:51.50

[1] Hopefully the occupants of this village are safely behind closed doors. [2] Listen to your co-driver and use the on-screen arrows as a back-up. [3] The bonnet view gives a good indication of just how knackered your car is getting. [4,5] Two-player split-screen races can be played in several modes and, yes, Arcade mode puts you both on the track at the same time. [6] The in-car hands, as first seen in TOCA. [7 – 9] More of that impressive intro sequence.

and race around (see the highly informative panel below) and each has its own, and for once very distinctive, atmosphere and challenge.

The game is based around the same engine that powered *TOCA Touring Car Championship* (page 109), Codemaster's previous winning racer. This is still some people's favourite racing game, however flash *Gran Turismo* may be. It's a good solid racing game with moments of brilliance. The handling is excellent for a start, which is particularly important in simulating a sport where the power slide is the favoured method of turning corners, and the handbrake turn the preferred method of turning tight ones. It also needs to cope with the differences between types of road surface and

IN PLACES IT'S ONE OF THE MOST INTENSELY FRUSTRATING, HAIR-PULLING, VICIOUS SWINES OF A GAME YOU'VE EVER PLAYED.

TRAVEL THE WORLD, MEET INTERESTING PEOPLE. DRIVE PAST THEM

Colin McRae Rally takes you to eight different countries in your quest for the World Championship. Here's a quick guide:

NEW ZEALAND
Population: 3.5 million **Capital:** Wellington
Roads: Gravel and mud
Common hazards: Walls and sheep

Beautiful rolling hills and fairly easy circuits make New Zealand an ideal place for the beginning driver.

GREECE
Population: 10.3 million **Capital:** Athens
Roads: Dusty gravel
Common hazards: Peasants and ouzo

Nightmare mountain goat tracks and stunningly distracting scenery make Greece a bit more of a challenge to tackle.

MONACO
Population: 0.03 million **Capital:** Monte Carlo
Roads: Snow and Tarmac
Common hazards: Royalty and yachts

This is where things start to get difficult. Horrible slippy-slidey ice conditions and mountain roads make this really tough.

AUSTRALIA
Population: 7.7 million **Capital:** Canberra
Roads: Just about
Common hazards: Kangaroos and cricket balls

The most fun by far. Glorious sweeping gravel roads that fly over humps and jumps. You'll want to go too fast.

SWEDEN
Population: 8.7 million **Capital:** Stockholm
Roads: Snow and ice
Common hazards: Cold and elk

Hateful, hideous, slippery nonsense. Get the car to anywhere near a heady 50 mph and you're off the road.

CORSICA
Population: 0.25 million **Capital:** Bastia
Roads: Twisty Tarmac
Common hazards: Barriers and feuding brothers

Twistier and turnier than a twisty-turny thing, Corsica is a real test for the boy racer with its fast, all-Tarmac surface.

INDONESIA
Population: 187.8 million **Capital:** Djakarta
Roads: Sand and mud
Common hazards: Trees and ex-dictators

Sandy beaches and dense, tropical jungles provide for some of the most varied and exciting racing around.

ENGLAND
Population: 48.5 million **Capital:** It is, old boy
Roads: Snow, mud, Tarmac and gravel
Common hazards: Hikers and ex-Spice Girls

Fittingly, the finale is the toughest of the lot with a huge variety of road surfaces and some very narrow roads.

1

2

00:36.02

3

55

CrashBangWallop
WHAT A PICTURE

13
14
15
16

01:58.09

Oz – Half a mile of gently undulating straight, followed by a 90 degree right, through a tiny gap between two railway coaches. Nasty.

01:30.15
01:30.23

3

4

5

STAGE COMPLETE

03:13.89
03:13.89

[1] The water effect is amongst the weakest in the game – and it's still pretty smart. [2] You've just been overtaken by a caravan – that can't be good, can it? [3] Don't ask us. [4] Lots of lovely tarmac. You'll quickly learn to appreciate its gripping properties. [5] The Indonesian stages feature many trees, all of which are harder than they look. Be careful.

WHEELY GREAT

With the increasing variety of PlayStation controllers out there on the market, we thought we'd take a quick look at four of the most popular, and find out which one works best when you're playing *Colin McRae Rally*.

1. SONY PLAYSTATION CONTROLLER

This works all right, but is pretty difficult to get precise control with. You'll end up repeatedly dabbing at the D-pad as you try your best to take a racing line on corners.

2. SONY ANALOG CONTROLLER WITH DUAL SHOCK

An improvement on the ordinary controller, but there's so little movement available with the thumb joystick that you'll find it extremely difficult to gauge corners properly.

3. NAMCO NEGCON

Hard to get used to, but once you've mastered it, the best. There's lots of movement in the twist, so precision cornering is easy. You've also got analogue acceleration and brakes too.

4. GAMESTER PSX WHEEL WITH RUMBLE FORCE

Gamesters lovely all-round steering wheel is the first on the market to be Dual Shock compatible (just). It's a tad pricey obviously but build quality suggests it'll last forever.

Colin McRae Rally

terrain, from level Tarmac to rough, bumpy wet mud, and this it does superbly.

The graphics are supremely convincing too. Although close inspection reveals that you are in fact racing down a tunnel with scenery-painted walls on either side, at speed the effect is very convincing. Also excellent is the way that terrain reacts to you; the way that water sprays are sometimes kicked up by your tyres, the behaviour of the extremely convincingly light-sourced headlights and the satisfyingly squelchy pools of mud you can fly through.

This is no mindless arcade racer, though. Each course is extremely tough and challenging, and there are varied terrains to learn to deal with. As well as having to set your car up differently for each section (you get options to change suspension, brake bias, acceleration vs max speed, tyre type and steering sensitivity), you'll also need to adjust your driving style to get the fastest times. For example, you learn which terrains encourage you to let the car drift and which require you to fight

[1 – 2] Indonesia offers the greatest variety of racing surfaces. Sand is one of the most difficult in the game. [3] Colin McRae himself. Top bloke.

> THIS IS NO MINDLESS ARCADE RACER, THOUGH. EACH COURSE IS EXTREMELY TOUGH AND CHALLENGING. . .

[1] The Subaru Impreza World Rally Car in action. Someone else will be driving it next year – Colin's off to Ford. [2] There's plenty of scope for yawning and fidgeting mockery if you finish the two-player race first.

CARD WARS

The Car's The Star
Colin's Subaru Impreza WRC

Top Speed	**160**
0-60	7.8sec
Weight:	**899 Kg**
BHP:	**300 BHP**
Price:	**£Lots**

Handling: A longitudinally mounted 4 cylinder boxer lowers the car's centre of gravity.

➕ A proven winner off the road, but due to be driven by someone else next year.

➖ Colin McRae is off to drive Ford's rather attractive new rally version of their already striking Focus.

SUPER. SPECIAL. SMASHING.

Recently introduced to the International Rally Championship, the super special stages are a great chance for spectators to see some real head-to-head action.

There are four such stages in *Colin McRae Rally*, one each in Greece, Australia, Corsica and England. If you manage to win a super special stage, you'll be allowed access to a new car. The prize for winning in Greece is this lovely Ford Cortina Mk II. And the other prizes? That'd be telling.

GREECE

00:04.87

AUSTRALIA

60

CORSICA

LANE 1   LANE 2

00:45.09   6   105

ENGLAND

LANE 1   LANE

00:44.61   6   106
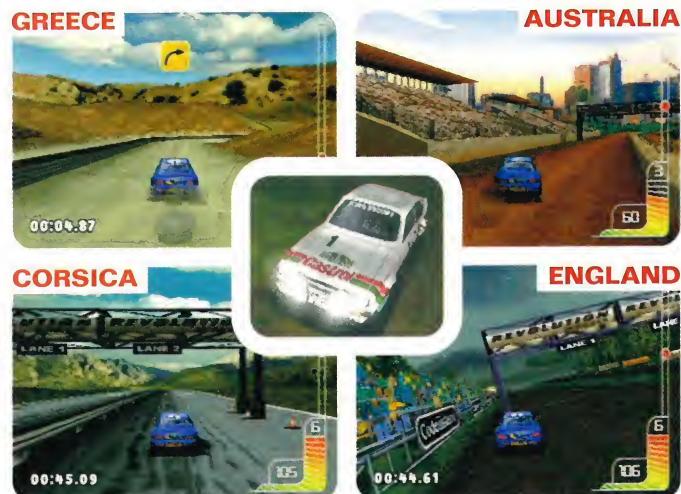
> THIS IS AN EXCELLENT GAME,
> THE ONE THAT TAKES THE OFF-
> ROADER TO THE HEIGHTS OF FUN
> THAT *GRAN TURISMO* ACHIEVED.

TECHNIQUE

Cheats

00:45.77

Enter the following as your name...

Buttonbash – Power accelerator
Nightrider – All night stages
Directorcut – Allows you to play with replay
Kitcar – Turbo boost (press Select)
Moreoomph – Double engine power

2

3

LOOPS:

00:20.06   31

4

BASIC LOOP	
POSITION	3/10
DIRECTION	0/10
SLIDING	2/10
CAR SYMPATHY	0/10
SPEED	5/10
BRAKING	2/10
LISTENING TO INSTRUCTION	1/10

1

RALLY SCHOOL

NOVICE
INTERMEDIATE
EXPERT

QUIT

[1 - 4] The Rally school takes you through the basics of off-road racing in three stages. Novice is confined to cone exercises in the car park, Intermediate gives you your first taste of stage driving and Advanced turns the screw.

hard to get the car to corner. You also need to learn to listen *extremely* hard to what your co-driver is saying, rather than assuming you can go it alone. He has the information that will make the difference between racing success, constant, hideous crashes, and learning to interpret his coded instructions is a very real part of the game.

To help you get on the way to becoming a class rally driver, there is an ingenious rally school for you to attend, with instructions from the maestro himself, Colin McRae. Here you'll be taught how to control the car and how to adapt to various different driving conditions – all vital info for the races ahead.

Colin McRae Rally is an excellent game, that finally takes the off-roader to the dizzying heights of realism and fun that *Gran Turismo* has achieved for the road racer. At its higher levels this is, in fact, a harder game to play than *GT*, and will require all your concentration and wit to defeat it, but then rally driving is just about the hardest type of racing you can do, so that's probably fair.

Original Score 9   **Steve Faragher**

COLIN MCRAE RALLY IS AN EXCELLENT GAME, THAT FINALLY TAKES THE OFF-ROADER TO THE DIZZYING HEIGHTS OF REALISM. . .

[1] The night stages present a real challenge. The trick is to pay very close attention to your co-driver's instructions. [2] If you don't this can and will happen. Lots. [3] The car set-up and repair screen gives you a set number of time units to 'spend' on fixing and tweaking your car between stages.

1

00:18.07

2

01:05.00

3
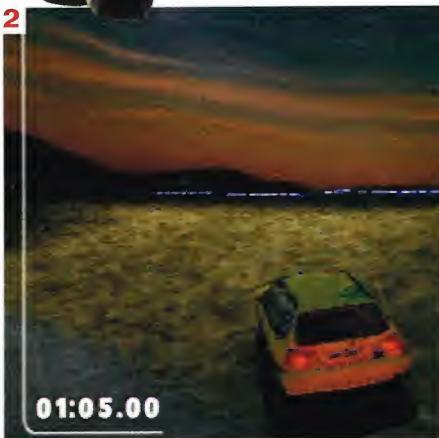
BEAT THAT

Car:	**Audi Quattro**
Course:	**Greece, Stage One**
Time:	**2:46:38**

The very first stage, and generally a relatively simple one, but we're confident that you'll struggle to match our best time...

Official UK PlayStation Racing Special

VERDICT

- GRAPHICS: **9**
- GAMEPLAY: **9**
- LIFESPAN: **9**

SPECS

- *Handling:* **10**
- *Speed:* **8**
- *Spills:* **9**

Colin McRae Rally pushes the boundaries of the off-road racer to somewhere near the *Gran Turismo* mark. Every racing fan should buy it.

9
out of 10

63
MPH

[1] The in-car view provides the racer with frighteningly fast action. [2] Driving the slower saloon cars is good grounding for when you graduate to the real beasts. [3] One of said beasts is this muscular Yank. [4] The Japanese aren't so flash.
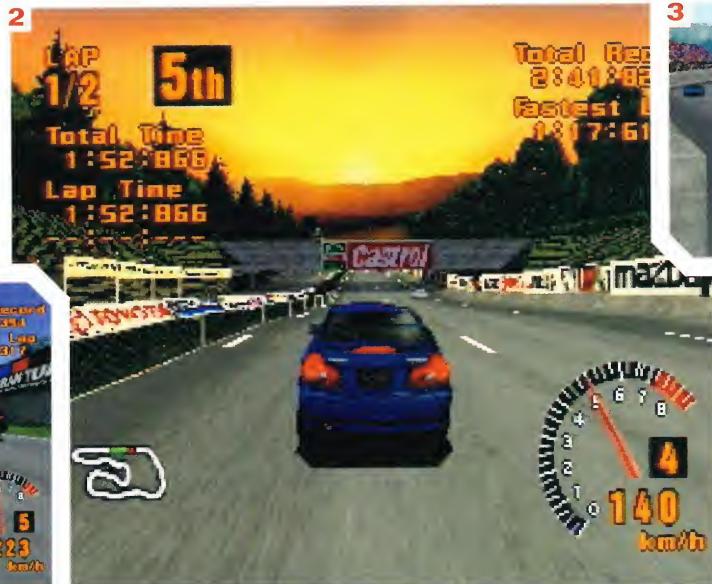
Gran Turismo

The racing game where the
only thing missing is the smell of burning brake discs is finally here.
Get ready for the drive of your life with *Gran Turismo*...

Reading through any of the American PlayStation magazines prior to the UK release of the game, or browsing the dozens of games review sites on the web, and chances were you'd find the odd critique of *Gran Turismo*, a Sony title that, then as now, was touted as the game of 1998. Another driving game, *Gran Turismo* is not – it is the best of the several dozen similar titles available in this format. Or, at any rate, every review

you might have read thus far would have had you believe this is the case.

It's rare, though, for a game to live up to such hype. And *Gran Turismo* has had its critics – people who rightly pointed out that the music in the Japanese version was dire and that, at least in the bog-standard

CrashBangWallop
WHAT A PICTURE

Set your suspension to max stiffness and lowest ride height, have the stiffest anti-roll bars and lots of camber for the craziest replays.

MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE — UP TO 4 PLAYERS — D-SHOCK/ANALOG COMPATIBLE

NAME THAT BADGE

There are 10 companies which have agreed to license their model types to Sony for *Gran Turismo*, representing car makers from Japan, America and England. Here's the complete list, and the top car from each showroom. Lovers of marques such as Porsche and Ferrari might be disappointed.

The Aston Martin is an exceptional motor car.

Flash, muscular – the Viper from Chrysler is superb.

Blackpool-based TVR shows off its best model.

Prefer purple? You can change the car's colour.

Faster than the Mazda, but way off the big performers.

Another Japanese marque, the greatest Mitsubishi.

The Skyline can be tweaked to more than 900 bhp.

Superb NSX, though *PSM* prefers it in canary yellow.

Colin McRae swears by the Subaru. They pay him to.

The Corvette can be tough to drive around the bends.

Arcade mode, the game ran a little too slowly. Both are fair comments; both aimed at the Japanese release.

In answer to those criticisms, the UK PAL release is runs approximately 25 per cent faster. New music, including tracks from Ash and Garbage, was included, all mixed up by beat-meisters The Chemical Brothers. The core of the game remains the same, though, with minor additions (a few extra cars from Aston Martin and TVR, fr'instance), a couple of omissions and, of course, English text.

So, what makes *GT* different from all the other racers on the market? For starters, the graphics. You can't fault *Gran Turismo* in the instant gratification stakes – you see it moving and fall in love. Instantly – we have found no exception the this anywhere ever. The attention to detail is frighteningly good, with virtually no pop-ups, screen glitches or clipping errors, thereby ensuring the track, cars and scenery are all totally solid and believable. And the speed at which you travel? It's not only quick, but also realistically quick – you can really tell the difference between a Nissan Primera and a Dodge Viper, and you can even subtly appreciate the differences in perceived speed when you gently tune your car to squeeze a little more power from its engine.

Likewise, the sound of the engines is so entirely right it's hard not to believe you're sat in the cockpit of one of the, oh, 300 or so cars that are built into the game. Yep, that's right – there are hundreds of models to choose from in *GT*, and in the Simulation mode (which was called Gran Turismo mode in the Japanese version of the title), each one can be tweaked and upgraded in several dozen ways. Each car, and each variant of each car, drives differently from all the others, replicating to a 'T' what the real-life model feels like to drive.

COME AND HAVE A GO...

One of the sexiest of the 'minor' features of the game is the *GT* two-player mode. Here you and your rival each place your memory cards, with your *GT* saves on them, in the two slots in the PlayStation. Wait a couple of minutes and the individual, tweaked cars that are in each of your garages appear in a list, enabling you to race your tuned creation against those of your pals. How cool is that?

> EACH CAR DRIVES DIFFERENTLY FROM THE OTHERS, REPLICATING TO A 'T' WHAT THE REAL-LIFE MODEL FEELS LIKE TO DRIVE.

[**1 – 3**] One of the most interesting aspects *GT* has introduced to the interactive gaming world is the non-interactive, let's just watch that one more time factor. The replays are so good that even if you aren't racing mates you have to watch again and again. [**4**] The 'Rumble' Analog pads works with *GT* too.
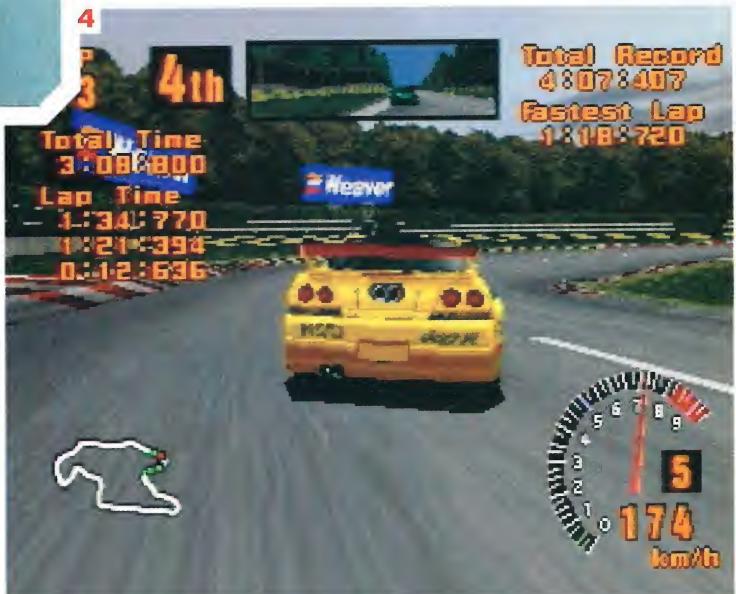
POWER TO THE PEOPLE

The really fast cars in *GT* are, well, bleedin' expensive, but there is a cheaper way to serious amounts of power: take your second-hand banger and tune the knackers off the thing. It's essential to build a rounded machine – there's no point being able to hit 150 mph if your brakes aren't able to slow you down enough to take the next corner. And that's why there are no fewer than 10 categories of equipment you can play about with on a *GT* car. Most of those categories have further divisions so there are, in fact, a total of 19 different parts you can alter. Take a bog-standard Skyline, say, and you can reduce its weight, up its engine parts and turbocharger to produce 912 bhp (rather than the standard 280 bhp), give it racing brakes, suspension and tyres and even paint it in a racing colour scheme. Providing, of course, you've got the money...

BEAT THAT

Car:	TVR R Cerbera LM
Course:	Test Course
Task:	Spin out more than 20 times

All you have to do is buy the car, get on the course and crash out with 20 continuous spins in one go, it's not easy.

So, is that just a myth? Well, this particular reviewer can't claim to have driven every car *GT* boasts, but he has driven around 10 of them extensively, from the relatively slow Honda Prelude, through the fairly porky MR2, to the awesome Nissan Skyline GTR V-spec, and can assure you the *Gran Turismo* representations are absolutely bang on. This is an incredible feat of programming.

But it doesn't matter if the driving experience is correct if the game's no fun to play, does it? Thankfully, *Gran Turismo* far from disappoints in this department.

As you've probably already gathered, there are two basic modes of play: Arcade and Simulation. The Arcade mode is split into one-player races, where you choose a car from a limited selection of vehicles and race through an initial four tracks. If you win these, you earn goodies, such as more tracks upon which to demonstrate your racing prowess. It's all fairly jolly and light hearted, and if this was all *GT* comprised, you'd be perfectly happy.

In addition, though, there's a two-player mode, where you race split-screen over a distance of between two and 30 laps. This is every bit as fast and as furious as the one-player game, though you get the added satisfaction of beating your mates.

Completing the Arcade mode is a Time Trial section, but that's

IN ADDITION, THERE'S A TWO-PLAYER MODE WHICH IS EVERY BIT AS FAST AND AS FURIOUS AS THE ONE-PLAYER GAME.

The High Speed Ring will be the first place you master before you move on to more demanding tracks.

pretty dull, as is the whole Arcade mode when compared to the Simulation mode. This where the immense depth to *GT's* gameplay becomes apparent. In this element of the game, you're initially confronted by a map of a city. On that map is your home, garages for 10 car manufacturers (see the 'Name that badge' box), a car wash, a licence test centre, a car-testing track and the Go Race area, from which you can access the five types of race available in this mode.

Going straight to your home, you notice you've got 10,000 credits to spend, and no car, so it's off to the city's showrooms searching for a motor. You quickly realise that 10 grand isn't a lot of dosh, so you have to opt for an underpowered, second-hand motor with which to break your driving teeth. A quick visit to your own garage (which is at your home, naturally) gets you some basic information on your car's statistics and model history.

Now it's off to the races. And you immediately hit upon a problem. All the decent, money-winning races are restricted – you need a racing licence, and what's more, there are three grades of licence for the differing race difficulties. So you need to visit the city's licence centre and take a series of exams, each of which tests your abilities in basic driving skills (or at least, they're pretty basic for your bog-standard 'B' licence, but they get a lot harder when you're trying to earn an 'A' licence or the super-tricky 'International A' certificate).

After spending a few hours getting your B licence, you get a bit tired of testing your abilities against yourself, and at least now you've got access to some of the money-earning races. So it's back to the Go Race area on the map, into the GT League and the Sunday Cup tournament (the lowest grade, and one which earns you reasonable, though not fantastic, amounts of dough). Each race requires a qualifying lap to determine where you start on the grid of six cars, and if you get pole you earn yourself some bonus credits.

The Cup lasts for three races, during which time it's possible to earn yourself a maximum of 27,000 credits. Driving the crappy car you've started out with, you find you only earn 9,000, but that's enough to take the car back to the manufacturer's garage and get

[1] The circuit scenery is varied – if you get the time to look! [2] Watch yourself around this bend. [3] If you do not take this to be a lush representation of a car you are mad.

some of the parts upgraded – the engine, say, or the brakes, or the transmission, or just about anything else you care to think of.

From here on in, you do some more racing, earning yourself some more money. You get your car tuned so it's pretty quick and you decide to try for your A licence

CARD WARS

The **Car's** The **Star**
TVR Cerbera

Top Speed	
0-60	170mph
Weight:	7.8sec
BHP:	1100 Kg
Price:	581 BHP
	8,480,000 credits

Handling: This handles fantastically but as it's a rear-wheel it tends to oversteer.

+ It looks the part and if you know what you're doing it handles very well.

− It isn't the car for a learner and tends to feel a little light until you get used to it. We love it though.

[1 – 3] Just one example of the nightmare that *GT* can present you with; a left, right, left, right series of turns over hillocks bordered by slippy grass.

WHERE TO RACE

There are many tracks in *Gran Turismo*, but there are eight core places you'll find yourself again and again. All of these (and their mirror versions) can be accessed for practice in the Spot Race race type in Simulation mode. And eight can be played in the Arcade mode, too. They are...

High Speed Ring

Course
1 HIGH SPEED RING
3.100km

TOTAL RECORD SIM — NSX TypeS
FASTEST LAP SIM — NSX TypeS

Don't worry too much about the brakes here. Pedal to the metal!

Trial Mountain

Course
2 TRIAL MOUNTAIN
3.979km

TOTAL RECORD SIM — NSX TypeS
FASTEST LAP SIM — CERBERA
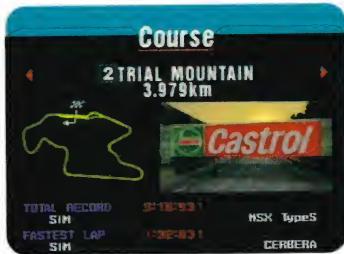
Again, fairly easy driving but there are one or two surprises en route.

Grand Valley – East

Course
3 GRAND VALLEY -East Section-
3.025km

TOTAL RECORD SIM — SUPRA RZ
FASTEST LAP SIM — SUPRA RZ
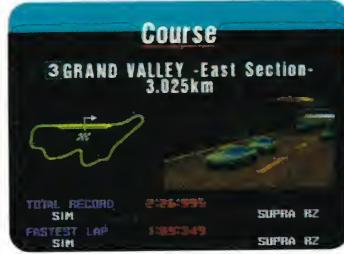
A massive, super-fast straight is followed by a treacherous curve.

Clubman Stage

Course
4 CLUBMAN STAGE ROUTE 5
2.466km

TOTAL RECORD SIM — FDRX7 TypeRB
FASTEST LAP SIM — IMPREZA'96SD STiII
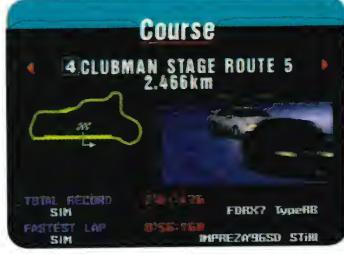
This circuit very much depends on how you react to night driving.

Autumn Ring

Course
5 AUTUMN RING
2.950km

TOTAL RECORD SIM — CERBERA
FASTEST LAP SIM — CERBERA
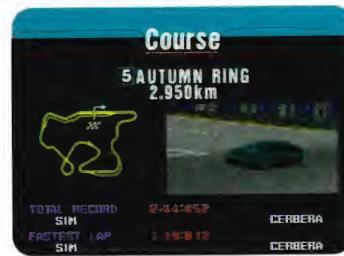
The Autumn Ring needs to be treated with repect. But it's okay.

Deep Forest

Course
6 DEEP FOREST
3.580km

TOTAL RECORD SIM — CERBERA
FASTEST LAP SIM — CERBERA

Tree-lined, with some nasty bends but many overtaking opportunities.

Special Stage

Course
7 SPECIAL STAGE ROUTE 5
3.776km

TOTAL RECORD SIM — SUPRA RZ
FASTEST LAP SIM — SUPRA RZ
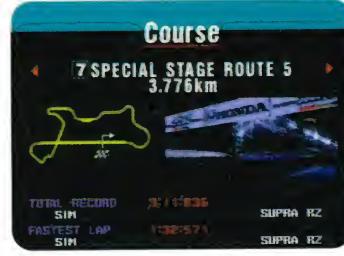
Another night course, rather tricky with just the one speedy straight.

Grand Valley

Course
8 GRAND VALLEY
4.960km

TOTAL RECORD SIM — VIPER GTS
FASTEST LAP SIM — VIPER GTS
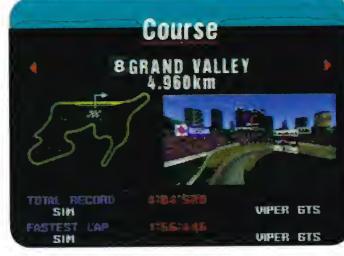
'Please Drive Carefully' signs should have been erected here.

[1] This is where you need your wits about you. The car view is extremely fast, and you may get bumped and lose your bearings. [2] Just before the start, the camera pans around the grandstand and on to the track. [3] Up against the big boys. [4] 207 kmh – this driver is really shifting.
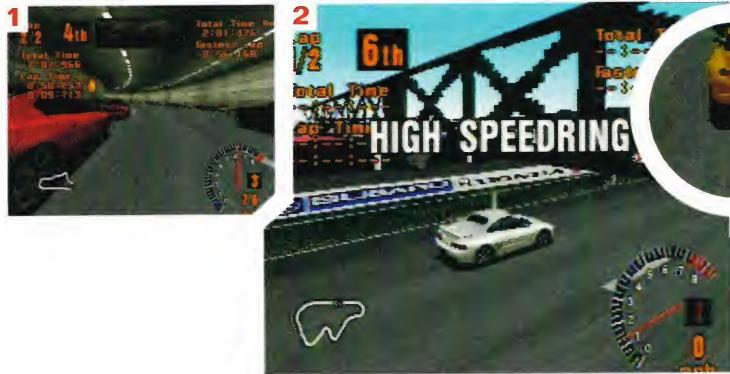
so you can take part in some more of the 20 race types over the 21 various tracks. You earn more money, flog your old car, buy a new one, race a bit more, upgrade, race, tune, race, consider taking your final series of exams, get your International A certificate, upgrade again, race, race, race...

It doesn't take long before you're snared: you're caught up in the *GT* campaign, watching the counter slowly notch up the number of days you've been racing. There are months and month's worth of gameplay buried in here, starting off racing 180 bhp hatchbacks on a Sunday afternoon and building right up to tearing around convoluted courses in 1000 bhp powerhouses at more than 200 mph. It's all so real, so involving and so completely unlike any other racing game on the PlayStation or any other platform.

GT is a terrific challenge – mastering the driving techniques just to do well with the faster cars could take weeks of effort, and that's even if you're used to real-life motor racing. It does have some minor faults –

[1] Drivers need to master the brakes. *GT* is a game where you HAVE to use them. [2] Reverse the viewing angle for a tick to check what's happening behind. [3] The two-player game adds loads to the fun. [4] The slow-down in two-player mode isn't noticeable. [5] That replay option is so cool. [6] TOO CLOSE! [7] Some obligatory tunnel action.

IT'S ALL SO REAL, SO INVOLVING AND SO COMPLETELY UNLIKE ANY OTHER RACING GAME ON THE PLAYSTATION.

there's no variety to the weather, and it would be good to have some more European cars – but these don't detract from the plain truth of the matter. *Gran Turismo* is the best racing game, ever. And you shouldn't fail to buy a copy the moment you get the chance, play it and play it and wait for *Gran Turismo 2*.

Original Score 10   **Paul Pettengale**

TECHNIQUE

Powersliding

The technique changes depending on the cars and four-wheel vs two-wheel drive but find track markers to cue your brakes and then accelerate out.

SHOCKINGLY GOOD

The Japanese are a lucky bunch. Not only did they get *Gran Turismo* months earlier than us, but also they get the perfect controller to play the thing with. These souped-up analog pads, called the Dual Shock controllers, are the first decent PlayStation pads to have a force feedback function with variable, er, wobble factor. And, indeed, *Gran Turismo* is the first game written to take advantage of them.

Playing *GT* with a Dual Shock pad is fantastic – it really does add an extra level to your enjoyment. The pads kick in almost from the start, doing their wobbling thing as your car's wheels spin. They get significantly more violent when you collide with another car or, God forbid, a wall. And as you drive over the red and white speed corner bumps, or even the grass, there's enough jiggle between your hands to give you the impression the car's on the edge of losing its grip, sending you into one of the frequent wild spins.

VERDICT		SPECS	
■ GRAPHICS:	10	■ *Handling:*	10
■ GAMEPLAY:	9	■ *Speed:*	10
■ LIFESPAN:	10	■ *Spills:*	7

Official UK PlayStation Racing Special

NOW

10
out of 10

Gran Tursimo takes every other PlayStation racer and sends them squealing off to the pits. It's as perfect a racing game as you've ever seen.

69 MPH

[1] Speeding penalties are in place, and it's up to you to control your speed.
[2] As before, press down to look behind. [3] The crippling loss of car detail
in action. [4] Le Mans, heading towards Casino Square. [5] Arcade mode. [6]
Mad drivers. [7] In-car, *sans* wheel. [8] Nice thin wheels you have there.

Formula 1 '98

Oops. Or as **Murray Walker** would doubtless have it,
"Psygnosis have dropped **a reeeaaal clanger here.**"

Suddenly and without warning, the prestigious *F1* series has done a Williams. It has gone from the front of the pack to crushing mediocrity, allowing the more diligent rivals to pick up where Psygnosis left off with *F1 '97* (PSM24 9/10). *F1 '98* you see, has them slipping quietly into reverse, turning in their seats and parallel parking into a space marked "eh?" It's certainly no better than '97. Indeed, it's arguably less attractive than the original *F1* which was, lest we forget, the best selling game of 1996 (*PSM11*

9/10). Like we said, oops.

Just as *F1 '97* was a completely new game, not merely an update and brush-up of *F1*, *F1 '98* has been written from the bottom up. Bizarre Creations, developer of the first two editions demurred this time around so Psygnosis gave the job to Visual Sciences but, despite their best efforts they simply couldn't match the class of previous editions. Pats on the back all round for trying something different and all that but, well, why?

Just what exactly are we wailing about? Well, graphically, *F1 '98* is a real and unwelcome diversion from the high quality, mature style established by *F1* and *F1 '97* The colours are brighter and while the TV graphics are still used in sim mode, the Psygnosis 'sheen' that made them such a ground-breakingly televisual experience seems to have been sold up the river for a more obviously gamey look. Fair enough, although unwelcome around these parts. What is less acceptable is the loss of detail and quality evident throughout. Compare the starting grids of '97 and '98 to see exactly how poor these new cars look. It's

NOW, IN THE AGE OF *GRAN TURISMO* AND *TOCA*, A TOP RACING GAME NEEDS BETTER HANDLING THAN THIS.

[1] Again, observe the flatly coloured cars two short grid rows ahead. [2] Nicely done, Williams Driver Number One. The battle for last place rages on. [3] Once again, you can turn the optimum racing line provided by the tyre marks on or off or, as in this case, ignore them altogether.

IT'S THE PITS

Amongst the many things we were looking forward to was the exciting sounding 'motion-captured pit crew.' But what actually happens is that you trundle up an eerily quiet pit lane before slowly (oh so slowly) trundling into a bay formed by five sausage-limbed mechanics. Sometimes you actually drive through a couple of them, with no discernible effect. And this is where it gets really exciting. The mechanics on either side bend over – ever so slightly – and a series of clunking noises are emitted before they stand up again. Exciting stuff. The best bit though, is when the jack-man at the front of the car literally slides sideways out of the way, like he's on a curtain rail and pulley system. Spooky.

no exaggeration to say that the cars four or five rows ahead often wouldn't look out of place in early '80s coin-op Pole Position. The first corner invariably reveals more disturbing and fundamental problems. And the frame rate is shocking.

This is just one of a series of worrying problems. Scenery appears a little keener on glitching than previous *F1's*, giving the appearance that engine isn't *quite* sure whether to draw in a piece of scenery or not. Collisions with this scenery are frequently bizarre affairs with the apparently feeble AI reduced to wobbling CPU cars in order to shake them free. Collisions are far from respectable, seemingly happy to simply teleport cars rapidly apart from each other in the event of the slightest contact, something which hightens the feeling that *F1 '98* has it's own other worldy laws of physics. The new pit crew? Well, they clearly need help (see It's The Pits for more details on their ghoulish existence). We could pick faults all day. Instead, let us concentrate on the the two worst offenders – opponent AI and handling.

Some of the racing that goes on ahead of and around you verges on the ridiculous. Cars leap from the left to right of the track, even turning a full 90 degrees at the start. Again, this could be the fault of the juddering engine, but the impression it ▶

IT'S NO EXAGGERATION TO SAY THAT THE CARS FOUR OR FIVE ROWS AHEAD OFTEN WOULDN'T LOOK OUT OF PLACE IN EARLY '80S COIN-OP POLE POSITION.

Crash Bang Wallop
WHAT A PICTURE

As in *F1 '97*, cars can leave the tarmac and often do, especially in arcade mode – the game's better half.

[1] A particularly gruesome shot of the *F1 98* engine going to pieces under pressure. Look at the state of those cars. [2] As always off-track excursions usually end in a spin.

gives is less of highly trained athletes pushing body and machine to the limit, than of demented chimps making a desperate break for freedom. Even the familiar circuits have lost some of their hard earned charm, thanks to the handling on offer. It seems that the controls simply can't cope with the real challenge that formed such a vital part of '97's hardcore appeal. It's not that the game is hard – *F1 '97* was no walkover. It's more that the controls are fiddly. Should you divert radically from the straight

and narrow, expect to wobble around for a few hundred feet before connecting with a barrier and coming to an instant (and thoroughly unconvincing) stop.

Arcade mode *is* significantly more fun, but what about hardcore F1 fanatics who want to play a full season? Now, in the new age of *Gran Turismo* and *TOCA*, a top racing game really needs better handling than this.

The up side? Despite its many faults *F1 '98* is far from the worst racing game you can buy and is one of only two available that support a split-screen link-up game (*Total Drivin'* being the other). This means that with two copies of the game, two PlayStations and two TVs, four of you can battle it out, which is, as you'd expect, great fun. You really

> ## SHOULD YOU DIVERT RADICALLY FROM THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW, EXPECT TO WOBBLE FROM SIDE TO SIDE...

[1] As expected, the intro is a mini-masterpiece, [2] If only the in-game graphics approached the standards prevalent here.

THE WAY WE WERE

Can't quite believe that *F1 '98* really looks worse than *F1 '97* and hardly better than *F1*? See for yourself and bear in mind that the frame rate *is* worse. Here we take a closer look at wet weather and opponent car graphics...

Formula 1

Not bad for a first try – nice plumes.

Better than anything we'd yet seen.

Formula 1 '97

Deeply atmospheric and TV-esque.

Better still – look at the detail on that.

Formula 1 '98

Nice distant clouds, but poor up-close.

Oh dear oh dear oh dear oh dear...

[1] Again, this would have looked great if it was 1996 all over again. But it's not. [2] Particle effects here, mind. [3] And look. Lens-flare. Coo. [4] The rain actually hides some graphical sins. [5] Draw-distance is fine though. Mostly.

ought to know that the promising looking *TOCA 2* (see the review on page 40) will also support this feature however and that *Total Drivin'* similarly sports four-player action. For the record, the split-screen modes do reasonably well but not massively better than Psygnosis' own *Newmann Haas Racing*, which was itself based on the very first *F1* engine.

There are CPU opponents in the two-player game this time though. And we also shouldn't forget what a mighty package each and every version *F1* is. You get 16 tracks, all those cars, the real roster (bar Villeneuve) and more tactical and set-up options than you can shake a dirty dipstick at.

But this year it's not really enough. A top name sporting brand like Formula 1 deserves a barn-storming *event* of a game, not a struggling-to-be-respectable title like this one. For all its bugs (see Cursed?), the original *F1* is still available for only £20. For the same amount you can acquire either

CURSED?

Bizarrely, despite massive success, each of the *F1* games has caused Psygnosis serious headaches. *F1* for instance, received a rapturous reception from the likes of us and massive sales quickly followed. For about a month. It very quickly became apparent that the game's CPU opponents were a few instructions short of a full AI routine. On longer races your team-mate often found it necessary to take a pit stop every other lap, hashing up your Constructor's Championship. Still, there was a way around most of the problems and the game was soon rehabilitated.

F1 '97 was a practically bug-free product, rigorously tested and confidently launched to an eager public. Again, massive sales were the result but only for a short time. Someone at the FIA took exception to the fact that the legal i's hadn't been dotted and more than one t remained uncrossed and demanded a full withdrawal from retail. The dispute was quickly resolved and, like its predecessor, *F1 '97* went on to great and well deserved success.

Why then did Bizarre Creations not handle this latest game? Was it a curse? Only time will tell what bizarre problems may beset *F1 '99*.

A TOP NAME BRAND LIKE FORMULA 1 DESERVES A BARN-STORMING *EVENT* OF A GAME...

Porsche Challenge or *TOCA*. You can even get the incomparable *Wipeout 2097* for less than half of what you'll be asked to pay for *F1 '98*. Think long and hard about it.
Original Score 7   Will Groves

[1] The Monaco tunnel. [2] Nice - but not nice enough.

VERDICT		SPEC	
GRAPHICS:	6	Handling:	6
GAMEPLAY:	6	Speed:	8
LIFESPAN:	8	Spills:	6

It's our sad duty to inform you that not only is *F1 '98* no better than '97, it's also no better than the original *F1*. Huge, impressive but just not up to scratch.

7 out of 10

73 JUN

[1] No, it's not in-game action.
[2] The Mini, Sir? Does Sir want his roof a comely chequered green?
[3] When a number of the drivers are blessed with the lightning speedburst symbol, mayhem ensues. [4] *Circuit Breakers* is the sequel to *Supersonic Racers*.

dirty driving!

Circuit Breakers

Bring your **old toy Matchbox cars** to life
in this **horrendously addictive** top-down racer. We can't put it down...

On the CD

[1] First to reach 20 points takes the spoils (you can adjust the target). Of course, you cannot possibly settle for just one race.
[2] The green Mini is making its intentions known. Brutal stuff. [3] The 'Professor Pat Pending' power-up gives you great speed.

Ladies and Gentlemen, boys and girls, it is incumbent upon us to make a formal announcement at this juncture. *Circuit Breakers* is THE GAME OF CHAMPIONS.

Of course, it wasn't always like this. There has been many a game deserving of such unwavering devotion. Some plight their troth at the temple of *Tekken* while others prefer their gaming on the brutal side – the splatterfest that is *Time Crisis* or perhaps the gore overload of *Resident Evil 2*. Obvious choices indeed but

BOLD-AS-YOU-LIKE MINI-CAR RACER HAS STROLLED IN AND TAKEN OFFICE BY THE SCRUFF OF THE NECK.

deserved ones. So what kind of game could possibly match such hallowed titles? How about a bold-as-you-like mini-car racer which involves neon glue, arcane castles, road rage and four skipfuls of adrenaline?

Those who've perused the pages of this magazine's sister mag, *PlayStation Monthly* for the last couple of years may be familiar with the original incarnation of *Circuit Breakers*. It was called *Supersonic Racers* (after coders Supersonic Software) and it borrowed heavily from *Micro Machines*. It remains a smashing little game, but with the benefit of hindsight, perhaps *PSM's* award of eight out of ten was a little on the generous side. Only a little, mind. Some of the courses are badly designed (too thin, too slidey, etc) and the cars a mite too small, but in multi-player mode, you really can't fail to have fun.

However, in the interests of scientific

1

2
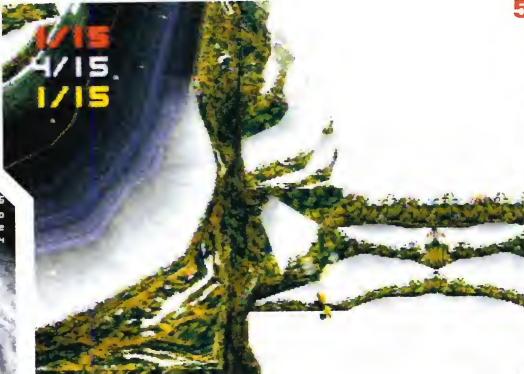
5 **[1]** It's that Mini again. **[2]** Slide away through the snow-bound circuit. **[3]** The winding alpine tracks feature some horrendous drop-offs. And the ice doesn't exactly help. **[4]** Drive directly at your opponent for maximum fun.

4

experimentation, Supersonic Software has kicked the game around the office for a couple of years and come up with *Circuit Breakers*. In the original, up to eight could play at one time, providing you had the requisite joypads and Multi-Taps. This feature has been chopped in half to a more manageable four, and it is in this guise that *Circuit Breakers* proudly earns THE GAME OF CHAMPIONS moniker.

Here are your instructions for maximum fulfilment. Arrange four chairs (preferably soft and comfortable – although you may wish to add a rogue rickety seat for your most dangerous opponent) in front of a large television set. Affix PlayStation and mandatory peripherals. Ensure that the 'Stunt Frequency' option is tuned to 'Plenty'. Play *Circuit Breakers*.

The object of the top-down viewed race is to leave your opponent(s) flailing at the bottom of the screen, while you speed into the distance gaining a point in the process. However, there are other, more dastardly means of dispensing with foe, namely collecting one of the power-ups which appear sporadically. Note the varied nature of these items of destruction. Learning how best to use the garnered inventory is an education in itself. Simply releasing a splodge of oil or unleashing

CARD WARS

The Car's The Star
The Fat Little Mini

Top Speed	145 mph
0-60	.5 secs (with a supercharger)
Weight:	The same as all the other cars
BHP:	Loads BHP
Price:	No charge

Handling: Great psychologically – everyone thinks it's heavier and turns faster.

+ It looks like a Mini, like out of the *Italian Job* and everyone moans about it being weightier.

– There is no difference between this car and the next, it just looks a little bit podgy.

1

2

3

[1] To gain points you'll have to put empty track between yourself and your opponents by means foul or fair. **(2 – 3)** One of the cheats turns all of the cars into coloured beans. For some reason...

CrashBangWallop
WHAT A PICTURE

The whole *raison d'être* for games such as *Circuit Breakers* is to stiff your mates, to sucker punch, nutmeg, grift, slime, screw and stitch them as shown in this example.
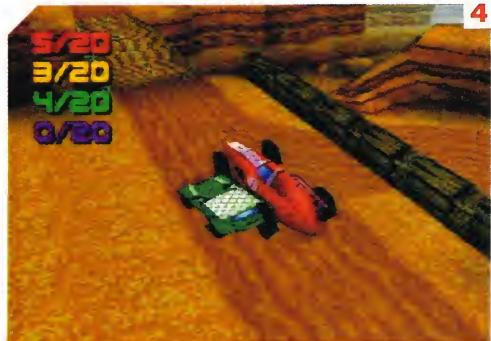
[1] If you go slow down the hill, at the turn you can swing your end out to knock the opposition off the edge. [2] This is just rude. [3] Speed through the ravine. [4] The Mini gets fatter and fatter the longer you play the game – this is a patent lie.

the throbbing forcefield is not enough. There's a time and a place for everything. Importantly, you can collect a plethora of items and juggle through them using the lower right shoulder button and be in no doubt that the 'added extras' maketh the complete racer.

The courses vary. Some are short, simple and easy to negotiate (indeed, these are usually the most effective), others, long and winding and rather too intricate for even the most liberal of palates. The latter circuits are best raced in the one-player game, where you take on seven other cars, bouncing around bends and using the impact to give you that extra yard. Victory ensures a crack at a new group of tracks, where the cars travel faster and the drivers possess a tad more nous.

Circuit Breakers is a jolly, knockabout affair for the lonesome speed merchant, but the very nature of its charm deems it an essential multi-player experience, with four the optimum number of contestants. Blasting foe off the track with a cannonball, shrinking your car to 'dinky' size, rocketing through the pack, letting off a noxious black cloud

[1] Engulf your mates in a cloud of smog. [2] This is the forcefield in action, use it to knock your mates off the bridges? [3] The temple is a little camp if you ask me. [4] There are loads of levels and there is now an additional disk with even more levels on it.

...THE VERY NATURE OF ITS CHARM DEEMS IT AN ESSENTIAL MULTI-PLAYER EXPERIENCE WITH FOUR THE OPTIMUM NUMBER.

to swarm an opponent's car, bouncing on someone's roof and squashing them, using the forcefield to send cars tumbling to an untimely demise – all these heinous ways to emerge victorious are so much more satisfying when the victim is sitting beside you.

The automobiles differ in size and shape but all handle the same, so whether you opt for a mini or a dragster matters not a jot. Inevitably, you settle with what feels right and the programmers have done a fine job on the car control. The surfeit of circuits warrant exploration, too. We love the simple canyon track, abhor the underwater submarine shenanigans. We enjoy the snow and Tarmac, but look away when someone suggests a powerboat journey through Venice. Personal taste, that's all.

THE GAME OF CHAMPIONS is by far the most popular office sport of the year. This pen-and-inker prefers *Circuit Breakers* to *Micro Machines V3* and it's certainly an improvement on *Supersonic Racers*. "One more go," is heard long after the cows have come and gone. So *CB*, have a mammoth nine points for your sheer cheek and impish charm. Away with you...

Original Score 9   **Steve Bradley**

BEAT THAT

Car:	The Little Fat Mini
Course:	Any
Task:	Top your mates

In any two, three or four-player game, from the off it is your task, and your mates' task to knock the other players off the course.

> THIS PEN-AND-INKER PREFERS IT TO *MICRO MACHINES V3* AND IT'S CERTAINLY AN IMPROVEMENT ON *SUPERSONIC RACERS*.

[1 – 5] Many complained about the game at first, saying that they couldn't see where the track was going. Soon though, when everyone knew the track well enough everything changed and addicts were forged in great big, er, fire of um, lustful, adulation. As it were... yes.

VERDICT

■ GRAPHICS:	7	■ Handling:	8	
■ GAMEPLAY:	9	■ Speed:	7	
■ LIFESPAN:	9	■ Spills:	9	

Best with four players, this is addictive, clever, considered top-down racing with some of the finest stunts known to man. Get a Multi-Tap and go for it.

NOW 9 out of 10

NASCAR '99

Move aside *Gran Turismo*, **NASCAR is coming through.**

Or not, as the case may be...

A two-player scrap for honours. Unfortunately it's not particularly interesting. At all.

here's a garage. On one side is *Gran Turismo*, polished till it shines. And on the other is *NASCAR*, bumper half off, exhaust pipe on the floor and fluffy dice hanging from its mirror. It's not hard to surmise which of the two is more appealing.

NASCAR is what Tom Cruise did in *Days of Thunder*. It's crashes and skids and canny behind–the–wheel tactics. It's taking on the guise of legendary wheelsmen like Davey Allison, Alan Kulwicki and er, Dick Trickle and raking in the dosh as you superbly take that very, very wide corner. Um, no. The truth is, it's not really any of that. (Except the wide corners.) It's just boring.

NASCAR is concerned with two things: coming first and crossing the line without vital parts of your vehicle missing. Cutting people up and smashing into other

[1] Sears Point. Without a doubt the best track in the game... [2] ...not least because of skiddy stuff like this. [3] The Ronseal man takes control of your car.

TECHNIQUE

Commentary comes from NASCAR's inimitable Bob Jenkins.

Bob Jenkins

Bob Jenkins

Powersliding

This is a powerslide gone wrong. You've got the revs in the red line and the back of the car is overtaking the front – it happens if you don't properly balance the slide with the throttle.

NASCAR Suzuka Thunder Special 100

CrashBangWallop
WHAT A PICTURE

You've gotta roll with it: This car's going to need a lick of paint once its wheels are back on the road where they belong.

[1] Flat out in fourth gear, but there's work to do – you're second last. [2] And this is what one looks like from the side...

[1] If you both carry on like this there's going to be an almighty accident soon. [2] Talking of accidents. Here's one we prepared earlier. [3] If you give him a nudge he should lose it too.

[1] One of *NASCAR 99's* fairly uninspiring 17 tracks. [2] There are also 27 drivers to choose from... [3] ... and 24 cars with loads of customisation options available. But it still manages to lack variety.

cars could be quite entertaining to watch (maybe), but by no stretch of a large imagination is it entertaining to play. Despite 24 machines, 37 drivers and 17 tracks it lacks variety. It's not that there aren't any options – you can customise to your heart's content in a comprehensive behind–the–scenes set up – it's that the tracks are so similarly structured. There's the occasional foxy snake to test out your braking skills, but mostly they offer little more than pushing X to get some speed up and then left or right to align yourself when you inevitably – and infuriatingly – drift against the walls of the arena. It plays like My First Driving Game with the CPU cars performing like they're taking

their test. There's no feeling of speed and therefore nothing very thrilling. Just ponderous driving in very large circles. In fact, it's difficult to imagine how to improve this, or any, NASCAR-based game without departing from the real-life championship's track formats.

NASCAR 99 is technically accomplished (save for a truly hideous in-car view where your driver's arms appear to be made of wood), but *NASCAR* is an abundantly average game. If there is promise, it's killed off by the mind–numbingly tedious course design. Which leaves the game somewhere on the M32 waiting for the AA...

Tim Weaver

[1] This is what happens if you fall asleep at the wheel. [2] Right hand down for some action. [3] The in-car view, complete with wooden arms.

TOP TRUMPS
The Car's The Star
NASCAR

Top Speed	**200mph**
0-60	**4.6sec**
Weight:	**1587 kg**
BHP:	**720 bhp**
Price:	**£bucketsful**

Handling: Should be tricky: at 200mph you are travelling at one football field per second!

⊕ Four manual gears with top using a ratio of 1:1 so flat out the wheels turn at the same speed as the engine.

⊖ There's no on-board computer allowed except for TV coverage, so there's no change of telemetry mid-race.

[1] Some traffic to wake you up. [2] Long straight, corner. Long straight, corner. Repeat 15 times...

Official UK PlayStation Racing Special

PlayStation *Racing Special*

VERDICT		SPECS	
■ GRAPHICS:	5	■ Handling:	6
■ GAMEPLAY:	5	■ Speed:	6
■ LIFESPAN:	5	■ Spills:	6

Third-time lucky you'd have thought EA would have got it right. Sadly not. While NASCAR fans may enjoy *NASCAR 99*, others won't be astounded.

5 out of 10

79 MPH

(1 – 2) The graphical detail is very high, but *Moto Racer 2* is so fast you only get to appreciate it in the replays. (3 – 5) As well as a variety of bikes, there are several views.

Moto Racer 2

Delphine returns to the world of **two-wheeled** excellent *Moto Racer* – but **is it a** **mayhem** with a sequel to the **step forward**, or a step back?

The racing game is one of the most popular genres for the PlayStation, with dozens of games currently available and more arriving nearly every month. Whether you want to tear around mountain roads in a rally, burn rubber in a Formula One race, or even blast away at the competition while driving, PlayStation racing fans are well catered for with one notable exception. For some reason, motorbike games are few and far between.

Until now, one of the few games to take advantage of the potential offered by motorbikes has been Delphine's immensely enjoyable *Moto Racer* (8/10 PSM26). First impressions of the shiny new sequel don't disappoint. *Moto Racer 2* features both superbike road races and trials bike off-road tracks, with eight bikes available in each category. There are 30 new courses in five locations around the world, several championships to complete, a two-player split-screen mode and even a 3D track creator.

The game itself also looks good. Menu screens are attractive and easy to navigate and the races boast much the same simple yet addictive gameplay as the original. The most impressive thing about *Moto Racer*

2, however, is the sheer speed at which the scenery flies past your polygonal bike, especially in the superbike events. Few racing games offer such a convincing sensation of hurtling headlong into the screen, and you begin to appreciate just how crazy real-life motorbike racers must be.

Unfortunately, all this dizzying velocity comes at a price in terms of smoothness. It's not that *Moto Racer 2* is jerky, it's just not quite as fluid as it needs to be. It's one of those things that you hardly notice when you watch the game, but when you play it for a while you start to realise that when you're screaming up to a tight bend at 200mph, every frame moves your bike forward a frightening amount. If you mistime your braking or turning by the merest fraction of a second,

(1) Wheelies and stunts are possible.
(2) Winning is tough at any level.

THE MOST IMPRESSIVE THING... IS THE SHEER SPEED AT WHICH THE SCENERY FLIES PAST YOUR POLYGONAL BIKE...

There are over 30 courses and eight bikes encompassing every make.

Sadly, *Moto Racer 2* is one of those rare PlayStation games that doesn't look as good when playing as it does here.

[THE GAME] CAN QUICKLY BECOME VERY FRUSTRATING IF YOU'RE NOT BLESSED WITH LIGHTNING REFLEXES...

CARD WARS

The Bike's The Star
The Blue Bike

Top Speed	198
0-60	2.1sec
Weight:	189 Kg
BHP:	147 kg
Price:	£27,000

Handling: This feller is quite a nice Middle of the Road racer, nice, safe and still very nippy.

+ It handles well, it has pretty good acceleration and, well, it's blue.

- It's not the fastest, it's not got the best acceleration and it's blue.

you're into the next frame of animation, which is normally far too late.

This wouldn't be too much of a problem, but it's compounded by weaknesses in other parts of the game design. For a start, the computer bikes are very, very good, they never seem to make a mistake, and maintain very healthy speeds at all times. Combine this with the very short races (three or four laps at the most) and the sheer nastiness of some of the circuit designs and it's tough. Not only is it fairly easy to crash, but one bump against the edge of the track can often lose you the entire race, as you don't have enough time to catch up. The end result is a game that can quickly become very frustrating if you're not blessed with lightning reflexes and formidable powers of concentration.

Luckily, the impressive course designer enables you to make longer races (both in terms of the length of the circuit and the number of laps raced). But it is a little annoying to have to design a whole set of courses yourself, especially as a great deal of the problems could have been avoided by simply making the races longer or the computer opponents a little less perfect. It's not that *Moto Racer 2* is a bad racing game – it's still a lot of fun, especially in the slower dirt bike races and when played in split-screen mode with a friend – it's just that it's not quite up to the same standard as the original.

Original Score 7　　Andy Butcher

The lower speed of the off-road bikes makes them more fun thanks to the fact that you can throw them around a bit more.

VERDICT		SPEC		
GRAPHICS:	7	*Handling:*	6	Let down by too many little niggles and annoyances. *Moto Racer 2* is a good
GAMEPLAY:	7	*Speed:*	7	motorbike racer, but unfortunately it's
LIFESPAN:	7	*Spills:*	8	not a great one.

NOW

7 out of 10

Everyone's doing it...

What is Arcade?

Arcade is Future Publishing's biggest new games launch since *Official PlayStation Magazine*.

It's a witty, intelligent multiformat mag for PlayStation, PC, Nintendo 64, Game Boy and Dreamcast, but one that mixes the games stuff up with bits on films, videos and music too. Why? Because games don't exist in isolation, and neither should you.

Arcade's the magazine for everyone who's ever played a game and enjoyed it. If you're a dedicated fan of PlayStation or N64, pick up *Arcade* up along with your regular mag – it'll be packed with stuff for your machine, but it'll also let you know how things are going on the other systems. If you're a PC gamer there'll be plenty for you too, and you'll get to keep an eye on those pesky console things. (You'll maybe even consider buying one.) But whoever you are, you're guaranteed a top read.

Arcade is headed up by Matt Bielby and Neil West, two names you might have heard of. Neil was, until recently, editor of *Next Generation* magazine in California – it's the US version of *Edge*, so you know he knows his games. Matt previously launched *Amiga Power*, *Super Play*, *PC Gamer*, *.net*, *SFX* and *Total Film*, so you know the magazine's going to be great.

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NEW! WHAT FUTURE FOR DREAMCAST?
The videogame magazine
Arcade

Arcade. 180 pages. On sale Tuesday November 17. Just £1. Oh, go on.

UP TO 2 PLAYERS

MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE

■ PUBLISHER: SCEE   ■ DEVELOPER: UEP Systems
■ RELEASE DATE: January 1998   ■ ORIGIN: United States
■ PRICE: £34.99   ■ STYLE: Arcade racing

Cool Boarders 2

Suitably **wintry thrills loom** large as SCEE's snowboard sim gets a much-needed overhaul. **After you with the boardwax...**
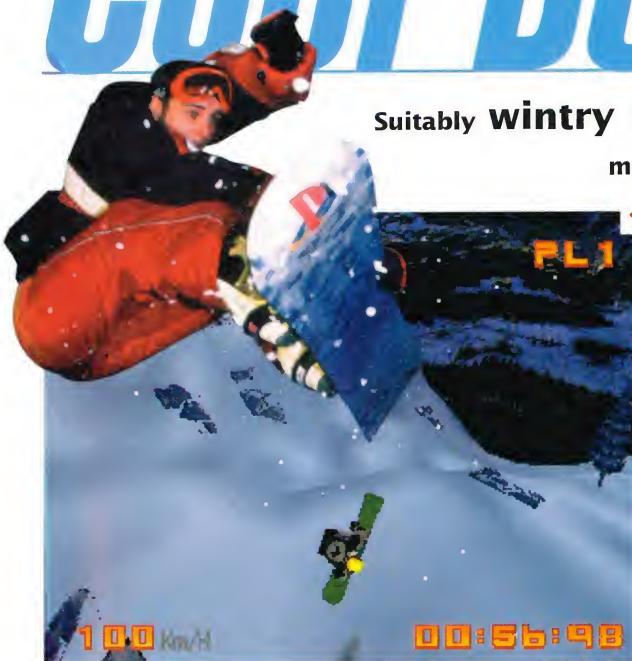
The Board Park has plenty of options for contortionists with a death wish.

When the decision was being made over what sport to transport next onto the PlayStation, snowboarding was probably somewhere below dwarf-tossing on the list. Crowbaring the emotive thrills of any sport into a videogame is tricky enough – how can dabbing an X-button ever hope to replicate the spiritual epiphany of the half volley, let alone the feeling of catching big air on a board?

Those unlucky enough to have played SCEE's lacklustre original title (check out page 115, er, dude) might have trouble believing it. But while *Cool Boarders* was a lightweight affair, its sequel is an improvement of almost immeasurable proportions. From the electronica-addled soundtrack to the new race options right down to the choice of combat trousers sported by your chosen boarder, UEP has obviously listened to the gripes about the game and done something about it. Unsurprisingly, *Cool Boarders 2* is still about strapping a Teflon deathplank to your feet while attempting to avoid icy oblivion, but rather than the infinitesimal tweaks that so characterise EA Sports' somewhat indistinguishable titles, UEP's wholesale changes have given *Cool Boarders 2* the depth the original lacked and, as a result, opened up fresh levels of gameplay.

What's so different? The lot basically. Once past the suitably 'rad' FMV sequence (puffa jackets, snow, grunge etc), the menu screen should warm the cockles of all those let down by the original's solitary downhill option. Five different variants are now on offer – Competition, Freestyle, Big Air, Half Pipe and Board Park – all offering varying blends of downhill racing and what is now the main onus of *Cool Boarders 2* – aerial tricks. While these were available in the original simply to rack up the

bonus points, now you can pull skateboard-ish Indy Grabs and Stalefishes in a specially-designed Half Pipe or during Big Air, over a selection of three stadium-style jumps. Each ramp offers a different amount of air time but what trick you end up contorting your boarder into all depends on your joypad gymnastics. Suitably tricky stuff and with the best (and hence most valuable points-wise) moves requiring finger-flexing skills of almost *Tekken* proportions, the perfect feature for those requiring a tougher learning curve. But with patience comes reward and that means action replays from a zillion camera angles. Each run is replayed TV-style, the camera following your boarder as he/she soars in the clouds, pirouettes like a Stüssyed-up rag doll and, until you get the hand of it, lands on the lip of the halfpipe arse first.

Fine details all – and ones duly matched by the sumptuous alpine skylines found in the downhill options. Whether it's the wistful Sunset Downhill and jinking Bear In The Forest, the 10 courses scattered throughout offer distant tundra, dappled skylines and what-the-hell are-they-doing-in-my-way? trees. All evocative of the alpine experience but all glitchy as hell, frames flickering as you steam downhill. But technical hitches be damned, the thing plays like a dream.

So, combine such mucking about with Competition's arcade racing rush plus the skills needed to conquer the Halfpipe option and UEP has transformed the *Cool Boarders* title. It might be the Christmas season but who would've believed in such a miracle?

Original Score 8

Mike Goldsmith

[1] Ton up and it's night time. No problem. Ish. [2] Window shopping two floors up. Everything looks good in replay mode. [3] Tree tops and fellow boarders to avoid, at night. [4] Don't worry, if you manage not to hit the barriers, rock face and trees there's always the cliff edge to keep you on your toes.

Official UK PlayStation Racing Special

VERDICT		SPECS		
■ GRAPHICS:	6	■ *Handling*:	9	
■ GAMEPLAY:	9	■ *Speed*:	6	
■ LIFESPAN:	8	■ *Spills*:	7	

Detailed sports sim, supercool arcade racer or just pure wish fulfilment for the suicidal, *Cool Boarders 2* takes all titles with consummate ease. Buy yesterday.

NOW

8

out of 10

All these shots are from the game itself, not pre-rendered intro sequences. Nuff said? But if you really want to know, the cars are made up of almost 1,200 polygons each, compared to the *F1*'s 700 or so. Happy now? Damn straight you are.

Formula 1 '97

The sequel to the **best-selling game** of 1996 arrived with an **impressive screech...** But does it get the pole... or crash and burn?

F or all its minor faults and the annoying bugs, *Formula One* was still an incredibly good racing game. It's not surprising, then, that the sequel became one of the most eagerly awaited games in the PlayStation's short but illustrious history. And when the waiting was over, the game finished, it was everything that any PlayStation owner could have hoped for – if not more.

But *F1 '97* was no mere update. Bizarre didn't simply spice up the graphics, change the names to reflect the current season, and throw the result in a nice shiny new box. *F1 '97* was still a Formula One racing game, but a completely new one, rewritten from the ground up and superior to its predecessor in almost every regard. Or rather, it was *two* completely new games. One is a pure arcade racer – fast, forgiving, simple to pick up, challenging to master, great fun, and horribly addictive. The other is a full-on racing simulation – accurate, realistic, complex, absorbing, and far more challenging, but equally fun and addictive.

So different are the Arcade and Grand Prix modes, in fact, that they almost deserve reviews of their own. But they do share one important thing: the graphics engine. And what an engine. If you thought at the time that the original *F1* looked great – and let's face it, it did – you were going to be stunned by *F1 '97*.

Perhaps the most obvious and most important change was the resolution. The whole game runs in 512 x 256 high resolution throughout, giving it a crisper and clearer look. All the various effects had been improved, with transparent smoke, dust, and sand effects, and a much improved weather system with rain and slowly increasing water levels on the tracks. Nowhere is this added detail more apparent than in the Grand Prix mode with some of the options turned on. All of the cars are fully deformable, getting crumpled up in the areas hit when colliding. And bits that fly off damaged cars stay on the track as obstacles themselves.

As ever, though, it is not the graphics and the sound that make a great game; it's how it plays, and this is where we come back to the two very distinct game modes. Whereas *F1*'s Arcade mode is only a slightly more forgiving version of the Grand Prix mode, *F1 '97* really is two games in one – and they couldn't have been more different in style and approach.

The result, then, is that *F1 '97* is still one of the best-looking games of any kind available for the PlayStation. It pushed the machine's limits, setting a new standard for others to follow – a standard that even its successor couldn't match.

Original Score 9 **Will Groves**

Anyone for sauerkraut? Then knock this man off the track.

VERDICT		SPECS		
■ GRAPHICS:	8	■ *Handling*:	9	
■ GAMEPLAY:	8	■ *Speed*:	9	
■ LIFESPAN:	7	■ *Spills*:	8	

Formula 1 was just the warm-up lap. **F1 '97 is the whole damn championship. In** the words of Murray, **'WE'VE GOT REAL EXCITEMENT COMING UP NOW'.**

NOW
9
out of 10

85 MPH

		■ PUBLISHER:	**SCEE**	■ DEVELOPER:	**Singletrac**
		■ RELEASE DATE:	**March 1998**	■ ORIGIN:	**United States**
		■ PRICE:	**£34.99**	■ STYLE:	**Bike/hover racer**

UP TO 2 PLAYERS · MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE

DO YOU WANNA TAKE A RIDE?

[1 – 5] You can't fault the designers' decision to provide the biggest variety of racing surfaces and backgrounds that we've seen in a PlayStation racer. While it's great fun to have lots of variety like this, it's a shame that a little bit more effort wasn't put into getting the challenge right.

Jet Rider 2

In a ruined world, **desperate men and women do battle** on anti-gravity enabled motorbikes... **welcome** to the **twisty, turny world** of *Jet Rider 2.*

I n the full-to-bursting world of the PlayStation racing game, a title needs to be pretty special in order to be a contender. In fact, it either has to be just about the best thing since mankind first manufactured pre-cut loaves (like *F1 '97* or *Gran Turismo*), or it needs to have a clever gimmick (like *Wipeout* or *Twisted Metal*). Both the original *Jet Rider* and this new sequel plump firmly for the second option.

Jet Rider's preferred mode of transport is the major gimmick. This futuristic machine is two parts jet-ski, one part anti-gravity machine, one part snowmobile, and one part motorbike. It hovers just above the dirt, sea, snow or rock of *Jet Rider 2*'s courses and, given a suitable run-up, is quite capable of hitting a bump and flying through the air for a ridiculous amount of time. Perhaps best of all, it has a magnetic grapple that can be activated at just the right moment to slingshot you around really tight corners. It's the kind of machine that is supposed to scream 'fun!

[1] When you get this close knock into your fellow riders. [2] Try to smack into other drivers just before they hit the ramp.

[1] Ooh the tension. Wait for it! [2] 'Vampeera' Silver – or as the game bio would have it: "well, she's just creepy looking"

fun! fun!' at you; an ultimate boy's toy. No, it's not exactly a Ford Fiesta. The handling of these bikes takes time to get used to, but once you've learnt how to ride them properly they have a surprisingly 'realistic' feel.

Unfortunately, while the bikes are really well-modelled and thought out, the same cannot be said of the courses. Initially there are three of these, with more becoming available as you win championships. The trouble is that the courses don't really do justice to the bikes. They're fun enough, but they suffer from being a little bit too fiddly – it's almost as if the designers have been handed a great big box full of parts to play with and haven't known when to say 'stop'.

Jet Rider 2 is by no means a poor game. Unfortunately it suffers from having the best competition in the world and not quite having the 'x' factor that would lift it from being a frustrating game to a great one. It has been marked accordingly.
Original Score 8

Andrew Collins

Official UK PlayStation Racing Special

VERDICT			SPECS		
■ GRAPHICS:		6	■ *Handling*:		6
■ GAMEPLAY:		7	■ *Speed*:		7
■ LIFESPAN:		8	■ *Spills*:		6

NOW

Great bikes, great physics and a bucket-load of imagination. Shame the reality of the course design doesn't match up to its ambition, or this would be a classic.

6 out of 10

Motorhead

And now for something a little different. **Digital Illusions** has created a **throbbing** monster of a **racer** that **breaks free** from the pack

"Motorhead is nauseatingly fast."

A quick glance at *Motorhead* may lead you to think, "Oh, it's *Wipeout* with cars", and in some ways you'd be right. Like the Psygnosis classic, *Motorhead* is set in a smog-hazed near-future, where neon-lit skyscrapers loom on the horizon and the sky is a delicate shade of orangey red. Here, drivers compete not on safe, well-lit tracks but on eight makeshift circuits which wind haphazardly though dark, industrial wastelands, abandoned docks, coastal towns and snaking canyons. To members of *Motorhead's* 'Transatlantic Speed League', safety is something that happens to other people...

It's no accident that this fictitious organisation has the word 'speed' in its title – this is obviously the main preoccupation of the game's designers, and they've pulled out all the stops to achieve it. Choose to race against three rather than seven opponents and you're treated to a mind-numbing 50 frames per second. In fact, *Motorhead* is nauseatingly fast. The scenic detail may block in late, but when you're rocketing through a narrow tunnel at 250kph, you're not really looking at the countryside: all you're thinking about is how to take the next turn without smashing into the barrier and sending your car spinning into oblivion.

Indeed, *Motorhead* is a cruel mistress from top to bottom. To start with, you have a choice of only three cars and two circuits. To open up more, you must select the league option and qualify for promotion. Newcomers start in the bottom of three leagues; getting to division one reveals all 10 cars and eight circuits, and these new goodies can also be selected in the two-player or one-player single-race options. But the hard part is qualifying: this is perhaps one of the most unforgiving racers we've ever happened across. Even in easy mode, bumping into the barrier just once and getting out of position practically guarantees finishing last. And bumping into the scenery is something newcomers do quite a lot. Each course is riddled with tight turns and nasty tricks.

You have to get to know your car too. Each of the eight well-designed vehicles in *Motorhead* has ratings for speed, acceleration and grip, and you're advised to study these carefully before attempting any race.

One definite attribute, however, is the truly advanced AI. Instead of following pre-defined paths, the computer-controlled cars make decisions as they go along, taking into consideration speed, corners and the position of other drivers – which means no two races are ever the same. The computer cars make mistakes too. If they spot a gap between another vehicle and the inside barrier, they'll often make a stab at overtaking, which can send them spinning off. (This fallibility is limited, mind; more often than not, non-player cars will ruthlessly and efficiently exploit your every mistake.)

If you want something with a difference, you'll love *Motorhead*. It's tough, it takes ages to master and its sensation of velocity is almost unrivalled.

Original Score 8   **Keith Stuart**

[1] Red sky at night racer's delight. **[2]** Take it to the bridge, and past. **[3]** There's a (pink) light at the end of the tunnel. **[4]** At 249 KPH it's best to avoid the edge of the track. **[5]** The computer cars make mistakes too.

VERDICT		SPECS		
■ GRAPHICS:	8	■ *Handling:*	8	A true adrenaline rush of a game, with a daring bundle of interesting ideas – not all of which will go down well with the racing purists.
■ GAMEPLAY:	8	■ *Speed:*	9	
■ LIFESPAN:	7	■ *Spills:*	8	

Official UK PlayStation *Racing Special*

NOW

8

out of 10

87
MPH

MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE · UP TO 2 PLAYERS

[1] Police cars attempt to box in your car forcing you to reduce speed. The swine. [2] An example of *NFS3's* excellent lighting effects. [3] An arrest is imminent... [4] Busted. Again. [5] *NFS3's* courses are visually accomplished, but strangely look better in reverse...

Need For Speed 3 Hot Pursuit

A game that combines **creditable racing with high-speed, bumper-to-bumper police chases?** That'll do nicely, EA...

First released on the ill-fated 3DO console, *Need for Speed* was later converted to the PlayStation. A sub-standard and eminently forgettable sequel followed and you could be forgiven for thinking that EA might have called it a day at that point, choosing instead to hotwire a new franchise. But the high-speed chases of the original deserved more than just a footnote in videogame history.

Need for Speed 3: Hot Pursuit features some wicked car chases. With sometimes as many as four police cars on screen at once, it's an admirable update. Pursuing police not only try to ram you off the highway, but also to block the road ahead while shouting warnings.

In the Hot Pursuit mode you take on either the CPU or another player on one of seven tracks. These courses are based on highways and byways, with a number of areas where cars can take different routes. For example, you can do 180mph along the wrong side of a dual carriageway. But beware, if you crash into a police car in the vicinity, you get a fine with the resultant hold-up acting as a penalty as your rival gains an occasionally unassailable lead. Get pulled over too often and an arrest is inevitable.

Car chases are not *NFS3's* sole concern, though, because there are races to participate in.

There's a Practice mode, with a number of assisted driving choices like Auto Braking and Improved Traction, a Tournament mode and a basic common-or-garden drive with Ghost options. The Knockout mode is the jack that completes the *NFS3* deck. This offers a set of races where the last driver across the finish line is automatically eliminated.

Such an admirable selection of options would mean little if *NFS3's* Ferrari-like chassis was powered by the coding equivalent of Morris Minor mechanicals. Fortunately, this is not the case. Its 3D engine, while quite naturally eclipsed by that of *Gran Turismo*, is surprisingly fast. Get on a good straight stretch of road with the Diablo SV, for example, and the sense of high velocity once you pass 170mph is admirable. Another bonus is that *NFS3's* courses are genuinely 3D. You can freely explore each track to look for short cuts.

The control you have over *Need for Speed 3's* cars is noteworthy, too. The original *NFS* created a genuine feeling of speed, its cars becoming sluggish to steer at high velocity, and this has been successfully recreated in the sequel. A handbrake button also improves the quality of the driving experience.

While accomplished, *Need for Speed 3* is hamstrung – in a direct head-to-head with *Gran Turismo*, EA's title just can't compete, but it's still a competent, if uninspiring, racer.

Original Score 7

James Price

[1] Pursuing police cars attempt to ram you off the road. [2] A crash here would lead to an immediate caution – as you'd expect.

VERDICT		SPECS	
■ GRAPHICS:	6	■ *Handling*:	8
■ GAMEPLAY:	6	■ *Speed*:	8
■ LIFESPAN:	7	■ *Spills*:	6

Official UK PlayStation *Racing Special*

NFS3: Hot Pursuit is for you if you love car chases, with the added bonus of an excellent two-player mode to boot. Definitely worth a look...

NOW
7
out of 10

UP TO 2 PLAYERS | MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE | D-SHOCK/ANALOG COMPATIBLE | NEGCON COMPATIBLE

Newman Haas Racing

Not content with selling his own brand of salad dressing, Paul Newman
also has his own racing team – which Psygnosis has now brought to the PlayStation...

The attention to detail is impressive.

One of the advantages of being a Hollywood film star: if you like something, you can buy it. Well, Paul Newman likes fast cars, so much so that in 1983 he teamed up with racing entrepreneur Carl Haas to start his own CART IndyCar team.

Since then, Newman/Haas Racing has become one of the most successful teams in IndyCar history. The team has finished in the top eight at the end of the season enough times for people to stop seeing this as Newman's second job, they have even won the PPG cup three times. Most notably for us Brits, when Nigel Mansell left Formula One for IndyCar in 1993, becoming the first man to hold the Formula One and IndyCar titles at the same time, Newman/Haas was the team he raced for.

All of which goes to make Newman/Haas the perfect choice for a spot of videogame licensing. And the shrewd business folk at Psygnosis realised that, rather than starting from scratch, an IndyCar game could be based on their proven *F1* and *F1 '97* game engines. So they got the experienced team at Bizarre Creations – the developer of both *F1* games – to work with Studio 33 to help adapt the existing code. The result is the first IndyCar sim to grace Sony's little grey box of delights, and yet another great racer from Psygnosis.

Newman Haas Racing gives you the PPG IndyCar World Series in its entirety. It boasts 11 licensed IndyCar circuits from America, Australia, Canada and Brazil, as well as four bonus 'fantasy tracks'; 16 of the most famous IndyCar drivers feature, complete with their teams and accurately modelled versions of their cars.

In play, *Newman Haas Racing's* roots are obvious to any PlayStation racing aficionado. It's based on a combination of elements from both the F1 and F1 '97 game engines, and falls roughly halfway between them, both in technical and gameplay terms. Graphically, the game is very polished. Everything is displayed in the PlayStation's sumptuous 512x256 hi-res mode, and it whips along at an equally impressive 30 frames per second. All the cars have been accurately modelled, right down to the sponsors' logos adorning their fairings. Likewise, the courses are detailed and accurate, and if you're an IndyCar fan, you'll instantly recognise them.

Where the game scores highly is in handling and feel – no doubt thanks to the involvement of the Newman/Haas drivers Michael Andretti and Christian Fittipaldi. IndyCar vehicles might look superficially similar to their F1 brothers, but they're quite different beasts and *Newman Haas Racing* gets all this just right – any experienced *F1 '97* player who sits down expecting this game to be a doddle is in for a surprise. Just how interested you're going to be in it depends largely on your interest in IndyCar racing. However, there's no doubt that *Newman Haas Racing* is yet another top-notch racer from Psygnosis. It might not be an *F1 '97* beater, but, nevertheless it *is* a damn fine racer and with the excellent two-player split mode it still holds some appeal.

Original Score 8

James Price

.aps to go

[1] A rear view is also available. [2] The cockpit view features a comprehensive digital instrument panel. [3] The cars and locations are true to life. IndyCar fans will feel at home. [4] Erm... Smokin' [5] The wide variety of locations and track styles keep this racer spicey for the fanatic.

Official UK **PlayStation** Racing Special

Official UK PlayStation Racing Special

VERDICT		SPECS	
■ GRAPHICS:	8	■ *Handling*:	8
■ GAMEPLAY:	8	■ *Speed*:	8
■ LIFESPAN:	9	■ *Spills*:	8

Newman Haas Racing is a great IndyCar adaptation of Psygnosis' *F1* engine, one that manages to strike an admirable balance between realism and playability.

NOW

8

out of 10

89 MPH

		■ PUBLISHER:	SCEE	■ DEVELOPER:	Namco
ONE PLAYER	MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE	■ RELEASE DATE:	July 1997	■ ORIGIN:	Japan
		■ PRICE:	£34.99	■ STYLE:	Racing game
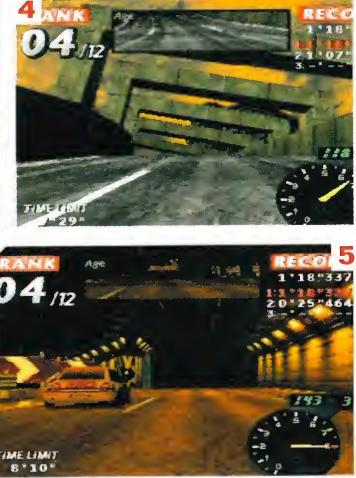
[1] Pedal to the metal city racing thrills aplenty in *Rage Racer*. [2] Never one to shy from publicising themselves, Namco have liberally dotted their logo around the courses and many of their games, too. [3] When you use the in-car perspective, you get the rear-view mirror. [4] Plenty of hills and thrills to get your head around. [5] Flat out, half blind with your foot to the floor – it must be tunnel vision.

Rage Racer

Namco have shown that when it comes to producing racing games, **there is no finer exponent. In this, the third** in the series, they've **developed the experience** even further...

On the CD

After choosing your car you can even give it a custom paint job.

In the words of Carly Simon, "*Nobody does it better*". Namco's commitment to the PlayStation has been a major factor in Sony's success in territory once dominated by Sega and Nintendo. *Ridge Racer*, one of the first titles released on the PlayStation, remains a standard-bearer but the sequel, *Ridge Racer Revolution*, was somewhat disappointing.

But let us welcome the third in the series with an open mind, content in the knowledge that Namco rarely disenchant. In fact, as luck would have it, *Rage Racer* is the beefiest number to date, with more tracks, a fabulous selection of cars, and an excellent Grand Prix section. Indeed, it is in the latter where *Rage* scores most points. We'll scoot back to this in a mo', though...

Somewhat strangely, *Rage Racer* is awfully drab of palette, noticeably so when compared with the golden sands and blue seas of *RRR*. Here, it's all slatey grey, like Lakeland stone, with seemingly no let-up throughout. Namco have combined various terrains to make up the circuits, the major influences being Mediterranean island swoops and curves, and steep city climbs and drops *à la* San Francisco. Think 70s cop film *Bullitt*. And imagine bouncing over the brow of the hill, your bumper thwacking the road. So although the courses might not

look as bright and breezy there's certainly more variety within, like a four-lane motorway and sections where it's nigh on impossible to overtake. High, banked turns, hairpin bends, flyovers and underpasses, single-lane bridges – yes, the circuits are splendid.

But it's the aforementioned Grand Prix section of *Rage* where the game comes into its own. You get three circuits to hurtle along but you can only start with the lowly 'Gnade' car which has the worst acceleration and top speed of all the motors available. Like the previous incarnations, you start at the rear of the grid and if you can earn a top-three placing, you gain a number of credits. Said tokens can then be used to upgrade to better cars or tune-up the one you've got.

Once again, Namco have shown that they have few peers when it comes to the out-and-out thrill of arcade racing. The pick-up-and-play experience of the original *Ridge Racer* remains, only now there is more longevity because of the incentive to progress through the classes and upgrade to the fastest cars. And you also have to learn to race using manual gears for the tougher sections, particularly the later ovals where speed is of the essence. *Rage Racer* – an essential purchase.

Original Score 9   **Will Groves**

Head for the hills, the big, wobbly stuff in the distance. OK?

VERDICT		SPECS		NOW
■ GRAPHICS:	8	■ *Handling*:	9	Namco have returned to the drawing board and come up with the finest arcade racer on the PlayStation. A Victory for Common Sense.
■ GAMEPLAY:	7	■ *Speed*:	9	
■ LIFESPAN:	7	■ *Spills*:	7	

9
out of 10

■ PUBLISHER:	SCEE	■ DEVELOPER:	SCEA
■ RELEASE DATE:	July 1997	■ ORIGIN:	United States
■ PRICE:	£39.99	■ STYLE:	Racing game

Rally Cross

A far cry from the sport dominated by drivers with strange names, this is the sort of rally you'd expect if you filled the tyres with too much air...

Coming from Sony Computer Entertainment America, you may well ask yourself, 'What the hell do Yanks know about rally cross?' And after half an hour of heart-palpitating, hair-rending frustration, you'll probably come back with the answer, 'bog all'. Yes, it's still all about racing across country, but this is more like *Ridge Racer* meets *Crash Bandicoot*...

The game gives you the chance to scream around a series of circuits in order to secure a placing and points. You receive 100 points for finishing first and 25 for finishing fourth (or 'last', in this case), and then it's on to the next race in the season. *Rally Cross* starts off in 'Rookie' mode, where you compete on three courses driven the right way round, and then back to front, for six races in all. And in the unlikely event that you manage to get more points than the three computer-controlled (and therefore insanely good) cars, then you win the season and move up to 'Veteran' mode.

For your pains, Veteran mode proffers a new course – the slippy-slidey Alpine ice level – and tweaks the other three courses, removing shortcuts, adding diversions and chucking in more mud. Should your driving attain God-like excellence, then you might even move on to Expert mode with, possibly, yet another new course. We say possibly because *Rally Cross* is so indescribably hard that the odds against this humble reviewer reaching it are somewhere up in roll-over lottery winning figures. There are two courses yet to be bested but we fear their secrets will remain just that.

Then there's the actual handling of the cars, which suffer most horribly from understeer: you're constantly battling with the joypad to make the car turn corners, and then as soon as it does, you have to put on opposite lock to avoid slamming into the other side of the road. For the first few races you end up flailing along the road, bouncing off the kerb, gnashing your teeth and, ultimately, giving yourself a really sore thumb.

In a stroke of maddening impracticality, SCEA have chosen to make *Rally Cross* entirely dependent on the memory card. If you haven't got one, of course you can't save your record lap times; but worse, you can't save your season standing and therefore cannot hold on to your 'Veteran' or 'Expert' rating.

Rating *Rally Cross* was tricky: by the end of the first session this reviewer loathed this wretched piece of software. But with time, it was possible to progress and tame the beast slightly. And now... well, it's sort of likeable. The graphics are exceptional (though a little cartoony) and it is a solid challenge. The only reservation is that many people might buy the game on looks alone, and struggle with it. *Rally Cross is a* sub-standard offering that peaks below its potential.

Original Score 7   **Andrew Collins**

This one should get you noticed at least

Even the jungle has a racing line.

[1] This game's so difficult, those cars in front could well stay there. [2] There are many different cars to choose from. [3] Learning this game will mean seeing plenty of carnage like this. [4] Multi-player split-screen mode. [5] Start practising your understeer.

VERDICT		SPECS	
■ GRAPHICS:	8	■ *Handling:*	6
■ GAMEPLAY:	7	■ *Speed:*	7
■ LIFESPAN:	7	■ *Spills:*	7

Official UK PlayStation Racing Special

NOW

Rally Cross? Really Cross, more like... Almost brilliant, but spoiled by a high frustration level and some odd foibles. A solid challenge... Perhaps too solid.

6
out of 10

ONE PLAYER	MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE	D-SHOCK/ANALOG COMPATIBLE

- PUBLISHER: **Electronic Arts** ■ DEVELOPER: **In-house**
- RELEASE DATE: **June 1998** ■ AGE RESTRICTIONS: **11 and over**
- PRICE: **£44.99** ■ STYLE: **3D racing/fighting**

Road Rash 3D

Going up the Queen's Highway, looking like a streak of lightnin', **MODAH BIKIN', MODAH BIKIN'!** Jump aboard, it's *Road Rash 3D.*

Life's a beach, linked by great roads like this for laying down rubber.

Road Rash 3D throws you headlong (often literally) into the US sub-culture of racing biker gangs, chain fighting and big girls in PVC vests. It's not entirely unpleasant especially if you're into leather.

The *Road Rash* formula has existed many times before, on a spread of formats. The premise hasn't changed. After visiting the bike shop and choosing your steel horse, it's on with some leather blousonery and out on to the road. Arcade mode offers a quick fix. The full game, however, entails racing to win. Success brings money and the opportunity to progress to harder competitions. Your honour as a wild-haired rogue is at stake. Racing takes place on a huge track system, modelled on the San Francisco Bay area. All the routes are connected so one can, if one wishes, simply take the wrong turn and ride off. Each competition takes place between two gang-owned cafés.

There are four gangs to race against – the DeSades (hirsute bullies), the Café Boys (karate killers), the Dewleys (chains, fists and so on) and the European Techgeists (posh techheads). Such is these gangs' level of competitive instinct that occasionally during the game their AI-influenced behaviour can become a tad boisterous. You might notice this as the steel bar crashes through your visor, because as well as a being a racing title, *Road Rash 3D* involves a fair bit of knuckle play. Fighting is intrinsic to success. While you might be able to act like a gentleman and avoid conflict for the first few races, the greased ones will eventually bare down on you. When this happens you need to be

ready. Weapons can be obtained by grabbing them from an assailant's hairy hands. Bits of metal, clubs and the ubiquitous chain are all present and correct.

As a piece of harmless arcade-style frippery *Road Rash 3D* works. As £45 worth of home entertainment? It's questionable. It is fairly easy on the eye, although things get a little scrappy when flying off the road into the cubic undergrowth. One also wonders why EA went to all the trouble of motion-capturing the main character, yet make him simply materialise next to his bike after a crash. After all, in previous versions, a biker flipped from his ride would have to dash all the way back to it dodging other racers. On the whole though the title plays quite pleasantly. The bike responds well to your demands. It doesn't fall over after every little bump, which for a title of this type is warranted. The fighting elements unfortunately fail to inspire – if your punch lands, it is more luck than judgement.

Road Rash 3D offers the player fairly simple, repetitive gameplay, which will suit many down to the ground. There is an effective feeling of speed and the cops arresting you for dangerous biking is a funny touch. It's good but not great. Which is a pity really, because wearing leather trousers feels really good.

Original Score 8
Stephen Pierce

[1] Okay. Who wants half a ton of throbbing metal between their legs? [2] Blind corner? I see no blind corner. [3 – 4] A sartorially challenged member of the fragrant DeSade gang. Nice chaps. [5] That'll play havoc with your knees

VERDICT		SPECS	
■ GRAPHICS:	7	■ Handling:	7
■ GAMEPLAY:	7	■ Speed:	8
■ LIFESPAN:	8	■ Spills:	8

Official UK PlayStation Racing Special

A more-than-reasonable enough arcade-type racer. For some it will rule. Others might wonder what on earth all the fuss is about.

NOW **8** out of 10

■ PUBLISHER:	**Mindscape**	■ DEVELOPER:	**Supersonic Software**
■ RELEASE DATE:	**September 1996**	■ ORIGIN:	**UK**
■ PRICE:	**£44.99**	■ STYLE:	**Racing Fun**

1

2

[1] Check out the purple 'devil' heads.
[2] Race the Persian Palace or go on a Rooftop Rampage. [3 – 4] The loading graphics are straight out of the Hanna-Barbera School of Tecnicolor Subtlety and the text is bouncy enough to jangle the nerves of the calmest gamer.

3

4
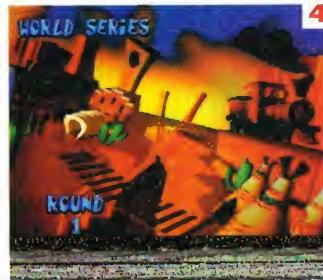
Supersonic Racers

And **how many games** can proudly proclaim that **you** can **drive through the mouth of a whale** and shoot up **through its spout?** How many, eh? Well then...

For those that have been watching too much telly, *Supersonic Racers* is a game much in the *Micro Machines* mould, the race-around-different-parts-of-the-house affair so popular on the SNES, Mega Drive, Amiga, et al. Supersonic Software were responsible for a version of *Micro Machines 2* and much of that experience has been brought to bear here. Oh, and *Cannon Fodder* fans will recognise the use of birds to obscure your view in the jungle circuits.

The cars (and the airships, the motor boats, the sleds, the spaceships and the rest) are beautifully sculpted, 3D polygonal chaps – neat and tiny, you could say. Each character has their own distinctive car and a racing style to suit, though the vehicles always run at the same speed. You could quite imagine watching Sloth and Martha, Varouka, Dr Diabolical and Blastem in a 1970s cartoon – *The Wacky Races* was a bit like this, only better, because Dick Dastardly's dog Muttley was in it, *sha-sha-sha-ing* 'til his heart was content. Still, you couldn't drive any of the cars.

Essentially what we have here is a full-screen, viewed-from-behind cartoon racer for up to eight players. Yes, on one PlayStation, Multi-Taps™ and joypads permitting. And friends. The game is instantly accessible – one button to accelerate and one to reverse. Braking becomes merely an abstract concept in the mind of Damon Hill. Anticipating the bends and using momentum to negotiate them is the route to success and you often find yourself skidding across pavements (or whatever) to sneak the best racing line, to jostle an opponent out of position.

1

2

There are 10 worlds in which to race, from Jungle to City, Space to North Pole, Haunted House to North Pole. Oh, and then there's Wild West, the Deep Sea, Zepplins (ahem) and Persia. Some of the courses are excellent, others too difficult to negotiate. On a couple of the tracks you won't have a clue what's going on, and on others you won't be able to control the car – the rainy city streets are a nightmare.

However, the reason WHY *Supersonic Racers* is a worthwhile purchase comes down to old-fashioned playability. What it lacks in excitement for the lonesome player (and it works surprisingly well with one), it makes up for when you add friends to the equation. Sure, the concept is hardly original – *Micro Machines* alert – but the game is instantly addictive fare. The only major problem with the game is that the developers, Supersonic, have now created *Circuit Breakers* (p74).

Original Score 8   **Will Groves**

[1] This is one of the slippy-slidey ice worlds. Ski-lift-type things transport you around the level – you've got to roll on and off at the choice moment. Kinda fun. [2] This is the whale mentioned above, you didn't believe us did you, fools?

Official UK PlayStation Racing Special ®

VERDICT		SPECS		NOW
■ GRAPHICS:	7	■ *Handling*:	7	Bring some friends and plug in the Multi-Tap™. *Supersonic Racers* is an eight-player frenzy of bashing and skidding in all manner of lovingly created vehicles.
■ GAMEPLAY:	6	■ *Speed*:	6	**6** out of 10
■ LIFESPAN:	6	■ *Spills*:	7	

MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE	UP TO 4 PLAYERS	D-SHOCK/ANALOG COMPATIBLE

■ PUBLISHER:	**Ubisoft**	■ DEVELOPER:	**Vivid Image**
■ RELEASE DATE:	**September 1998**	■ AGE RESTRICTION:	**None**
■ PRICE:	**£39.99**	■ STYLE:	**Racing Fun**
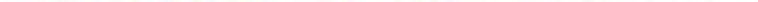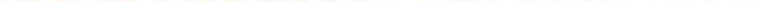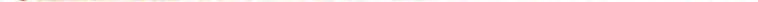
[1] Jockying for position at the start of a race. [2] The Aztec course is the easiest track on offer. [3] Time to use the jump button, perhaps? [4] The ever-pretty Island course. [5] Yet more eye candy.

S.C.A.R.S.

Imitation may be the **highest form of flattery,**
but is latest mini racer *S.C.A.R.S.* **any good?**

If you're hunting for the quintessential description of Ubisoft's *S.C.A.R.S.*, this should save you time. 'Familiar' will be the word that stares back at you from the polygonal mire – *S.C.A.R.S.* is bit like a certain old SNES racing game. For 'bit', read: 'lot'. And for 'lot', read: '*MARIO KART! MARIO KART!* FLAMING *MARIO KART!*. Ahem.

Shameless, yes? But, with nine tracks, six or so characters (plus their secret companions, more on which later) and three main play modes, *S.C.A.R.S.* can be excused for its relative creative bankruptcy. The reason? In terms of playability, it's a rich game indeed.

S.C.A.R.S.' driving mechanics are biased towards the 'drift' model so beloved of Namco and Sega racing games, with vehicles sliding into and through corners as if travelling on banana-skin wheels. Indeed, and quite unlike more immediate cartoon-style racers like *Micro Machines* and *Circuit Breakers*, *S.C.A.R.S.* is a game that requires patient practice. You will find yourself sliding into every available wall and obstacle during early games yet, with experience, using the handbrake to glide gracefully round corners becomes second nature.

Similarly, its range of offensive weaponry appears bizarre on first encounter. The straightforward missile, shield and a turbo collectables shouldn't give you too much trouble, but *S.C.A.R.S.* also features what can only be described as "tactical" weaponry such as the Stinger, Stopper and Magnet. The influence this has on races is considerable.

Your choice of vehicle, too, will have a direct bearing on your race winning strategy. With each motor having individual stats in various categories, choosing the car to best suit your play style is, shall we say, rather important. If you can't master the art of drifting through corners, a slower vehicle like the Mammoth would be best, given its excellent roadholding. Otherwise, the faster Rhino would be a fair bet if you have a hankering for less fighting, and more driving.

Visually, *S.C.A.R.S.* varies from the pleasant to the excellent. Its textures are clear and well-defined, and its courses are a delight to behold. Each track has its own theme, so there's plentiful supplies of eye-candy here.

Unfortunately *S.C.A.R.S.* doesn't offer a huge amount of longevity for the solo player – the three championships and Challenge modes can be finished after the first few days of play. You can create custom cups, but... Well, it's never quite the same, is it? If only Vivid Image could have packed *S.C.A.R.S.* with more competitions, each boasting its own small yet significant reward by way of extra incentive.

S.C.A.R.S. is easy to beat (despite its four speed-based skill settings) and the game lacks the secrets and quirks that separate the great from the good. Still, if it's an updated *Mario Kart* for the PlayStation you hanker for, you'll not find much better than this.
Original Score 8   **James Price**

[1] Accelerate just as the green light appears in order to get a flying start. [2] Night driving is challenging, to say the least. Funky headlights, mind.

VERDICT		SPECS			NOW
■ GRAPHICS:	8	■ *Handling:*		9	A neat racing game which will give *Circuit Breakers* a run for its money. If only there was a little more to it, it could have been one of the greats...
■ GAMEPLAY:	8	■ *Speed:*		7	
■ LIFESPAN:	7	■ *Spills:*		8	

8 out of 10

UP TO 2 PLAYERS · MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE · O-SHOCK/ANALOG COMPATIBLE

PlayTest

Test Drive 5

The seemingly **unstoppable** *Test Drive* returns for a fifth outing, but **was it really worth the effort?**

[1 – 3] It's those selection/option screens which are the bane of so many caption-writers. **[2]** The TVR Cerbera, whatever the game this is always a popular choice in the office.

Some games have an undeniable appeal. After all, the chance to drive some of the world's most powerful and expensive sports cars is very seductive. *Test Drive 5* is even more tempting than most, boasting several new models and even some concept cars that have yet to be commercially released. The brutish lines of the TVR Speed 12 or the slick refinement of the Aston Martin Project Vantage are hard to resist. Unfortunately, all of this promise just makes the game even more disappointing.

The problem is *Test Drive 5*, like the previous games in the series, doesn't drive very well. It may have loads of sumptuous cars to choose from, but when you actually get into the race, they all drive very much like each other and very much unlike the real things – even on the 'simulation' setting. It's a little alarming to find that the world's greatest sports cars are all unstable above 100mph, steer like pigs, have minimal grip and take simply ages to get to anywhere near top speed.

On the positive side there are plenty of courses and championships to choose from. Most are street races that see you weaving in and out of traffic

and dodging police cars and this is appealing, but it's just not enough. After games like *Gran Turismo*, *TOCA Touring Car 2* and *Colin McRae Rally*, it's hard to get much enjoyment from games like this. Being an arcadey racer isn't a bad thing, but arcadey racers have to provide a lot of fun to compete with the more realistic racing games available for the PlayStation – and *Test Drive 5* just isn't.

Instead, it's just a bit of a let down and, ultimately, rather frustrating. To be fair, it's far from the worst racing game ever to appear on the PlayStation and a year or two ago it would have been impressive. However, given the number of stunningly good racing games you have to choose from these days, *Test Drive 5* just can't keep up with the competition.

Original Score 8
Andy Butcher

[1 – 2] Pile ups have always been popular with every version of *TD*.

Not a big car, this is a *jumping* car. See?

VERDICT			SPECS			NOW
■ GRAPHICS:		7	■ *Handling*:		7	An exceedingly average racing game
■ GAMEPLAY:		6	■ *Speed*:		8	that promises far more than it delivers,
■ LIFESPAN:		6	■ *Spills*:		8	thanks to the track record of it's previous incarnations.

8 out of 10

95 MPH

UP TO 2 PLAYERS	MEMORY CARD COMPATIBLE	■ PUBLISHER:	**Infogrames**	■ DEVELOPER:	**Eutechnyx**
		■ RELEASE DATE:	**October 1997**	■ ORIGIN:	**UK**
		■ PRICE:	**£44.99**	■ STYLE:	**Racing**

Total Drivin'

Rejoice, for the wheel has been **reinvented!** It's no longer polygonal but round, but **that doesn't mean it works any better...**

[1] Scenery looks good, but not in split screen mode. **[2]** If you want sparks, this game's got 'em. **[3]** There are a mighty 36 tracks to race. **[4]** How embarrassing, you've spun in front of all those people. **[5]** Catching a tube.
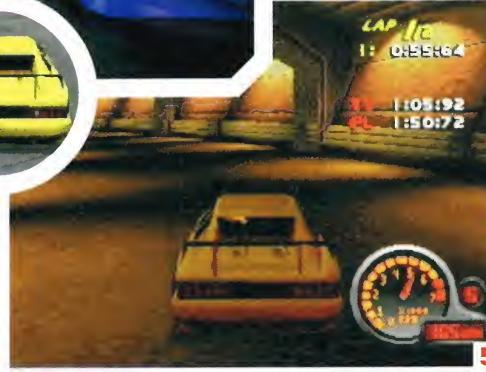
When the press blurb makes a big issue about the wheels on the cars being genuinely round, you have to wonder how good a racing game is going to be.

What is novel, however, is the way that *Total Drivin'* blends not one, not two, but *five* different classes of car, each of which races around appropriate track styles. There are race cars, which are tied to road tracks in Japan; there are Indy cars for the total speed-experience, also on road courses; there are buggies, which you get to bounce over dunes in Easter Island and Egypt; there are Dakar Rally buggies, for similar environments; and finally there are rally cars which race around the Scottish Highlands and the Swiss Alps. That's a lot of driving styles to master, and it's this game's hook over pretty well every other racer on the PlayStation.

The race cars, which you drive on the Japanese and Russian circuits, are perhaps the most disappointing. Although the sense of speed is there, the cars handle a little too easily.

The reverse applies when you progress on to the Indy cars. They're an absolute bitch to drive – they've got all the straight line speed and acceleration you could possibly hope for (and a little bit more), but trying to slow down and get around corners is one hell of a task.

It's not so gloomy when it comes to driving the buggies, though. The dry, bumpy desert courses of Easter Island and Egypt make for a good laugh as well as a great drive, but boy racer tactics will see your car on its back, wheels pointing skyward.

And if you thought the buggies were tough, just wait until you've progressed on to the excellent Dakar Rally cars. These super-dune buggies bounce and shift all over the shop, making even completing the course difficult, let alone doing well in the race order.

Finally we have the rally cars, which do a good impression of the cars you're no doubt used to driving in *V-Rally*. We'd have to say that the rally cars are the most rewarding to drive.

What are not quite so rewarding, however, are the graphics. Although initially impressive, they don't have the detail or the finesse of either *Rage Racer* or *V-Rally*.

This game's winning ticket is its variation. There are 40 different cars to drive (five different types and eight international teams, each of which has cars that handle slightly differently), there are 36 tracks to tackle, and as you progress, the hazards on the tracks become increasingly diverse. But *Total Drivin'* doesn't quite hang together as a single game; instead it feels like a collection of different driving games. It's good, but has spread itself just a little too thinly, and fails to score that little bit higher as a result.

Original Score 8   **Andrew Collins**

Well, that's one way of getting a closer look at the track.

Official UK PlayStation *Racing Special*

VERDICT			SPECS		
■ GRAPHICS:		**7**	■ *Handling:*		**7**
■ GAMEPLAY:		**9**	■ *Speed:*		**8**
■ LIFESPAN:		**9**	■ *Spills:*		**7**

NOW

An extremely competent driving game with huge variety in tracks and car types. But its varying quality throughout those types hinders its overall enjoyability.

8
out of 10

Tommi Mäkinen Rally

The popular rally market has found another son to come out and embrace the PlayStation ...**so without further ado, here's Tommi!**

[1] The alpine sections are always exciting. [2] True to life the cars hold their line better on Tarmac. [3 – 4] Hit the checkpoint in time and you can progress. [5] Cunningly placed arrows allow the driver to anticipate bends. [6] Steady on there, Tommi boy.

At the start of the game you can choose between a number of different rally cars. As you progress you can upgrade to a faster car, which you'll need to overcome the more challenging opponents in the latter stages.

Yes it's motor racing game. But as we've seen before, the purchase of a license is certainly no guarantee of quality itself. What's more *Tommi Mäkinen Rally*, perhaps unwisely, showed its colours at exactly the same time as Codemasters' *Colin McRae Rally* (see page 60). Colin McRae had the distinct advantage of the successful *TOCA: Touring Car Challenge* behind him and *TOCA*'s smooth racing engine was adapted for *McRae Rally*.

Europress has no such pedigree when it comes to the PlayStation. *Tommi Mäkinen Rally* is its first PlayStation release. *Mäkinen* is a game which, although competent in its ability to deliver a reasonably exciting ride, does little else to distinguish itself.

Having said that the designers of *Tommi Mäkinen* haven't fallen shy when it comes to gaming options, for they are myriad. There's a welter of circuits, set in 15 locations across the globe, each with three or more tracks. Surfaces vary from country to country and you encounter a variety of weather conditions.

There are also various modes in which to play the game including Arcade, Championship and Time Trial options. There's also a generous offer to 'Challenge Tommi' and he chips in with the odd helpful comment when things go awry. Importantly, a two-player, split-screen joust is pitched in, too, and while it doesn't match *V-Rally*'s two-player game, it certainly does a passable job.

There are nine cars in the game, each modelled accurately on their real-life counterparts. But circuits and motor vehicles galore doth not a great racer make. Compare the visuals in *Tommi Mäkinen* with Infogrames' *V-Rally*, and *Colin McRae*, and poor Tom fails miserably.

Unfortunately, there are few of the handling subtleties that make the cars in *Colin McRae Rally* such a joy to drive. Learning to perfect the handling and grasping the nuances of a racing game is as much part of the fun as winning races.

Every software company wants its day at the races and three years ago *Mäkinen* would have been heralded as a ground-breaking title, where now it's merely an also-ran. Maybe next time...

Original Score 6   **Steve Bradley**

VERDICT		SPECS			NOW
■ GRAPHICS:	5	■ *Handling*:	6	**Tommi** is a disappointment when compared with some of the great PlayStation racers of recent times. ***Colin McRae*** is the rally champ.	**6** out of 10
■ GAMEPLAY:	6	■ *Speed*:	6		
■ LIFESPAN:	6	■ *Spills*:	7		

Official UK PlayStation Racing Special

Official UK **PlayStation** Racing Special

Vigilante 8

Pull up to the bumper, baby and unleash your stock of missiles
at a school bus in this *Dukes of Hazard* inspired game of car wars.

This makes perfect sense. With the traditional track-based racer left choking on *Gran Turismo*'s turbo-cooled exhaust fumes, the only sensible way for the driving game to go is seriously over the top. Lose the lap counter, set it in an arena, sprinkle liberally with weapons and make the whole thing more like deathmatch *Doom* on wheels. Chuck in some 70s style and anyone who has ever enjoyed an illicit loop the wrong way round a circuit looking for a head-on collision in a 'proper' racer should be more than happy.

We've been down this debris strewn road before. Most notably, of course, with the superb *Twisted Metal* and *Twisted Metal 2* (see Listings om page 121 for both

games). *Vigilante 8* has more than a passing resemblance to SingleTrac's often under-rated car combat extravaganzas and by shifting the game into this oh-so-funky 70s territory, Activision is fooling nobody. You still get to choose a mad-looking driver and drive their kerazy custom vehicle around themed battle zones, picking up weapons to knock down your opponent's energy bars and eventually turn them into a small cube of smouldering metal.

Graphically, the game shows how far standards have been raised since *Twisted Metal 2*. The vehicles look suitably groovy and practically all the scenery in the expansive levels can be blown up with weapons that show off impressive lighting effects. Although it looks so much better than the venerable *Metal*, *Vigilante 8* never quite combusts like its man-made fibre clad cast suggests it should. Partly it's down to the weapons set up which doesn't come close to offering the variety of encounters that gave *Twisted Metal* a tactical edge to its carnage.

Vigilante's vehicles only really differ in speed. They all feel the same and sadly have universally poor handling. Lining yourself up for a jump can be pretty tricky and your motor's constant bouncing can drive you to distraction. The structure of the game is also slightly flawed. The Quest Mode has your character progressing through the different locations and beating a boss character. But rather than measuring victory merely by surviving, you also need to fulfil other objectives such as protecting a particular building from attack. This not only seems to go against the grain in what is supposed to be an all-out destruction game, but is also frustrating when structures crumble to the ground through no fault of your own.

Vigilante 8 can be enjoyable, especially in the two-player split screen vs/cooperative mode and that's probably the best way to play the game. Other than that it's just a passing fancy.

Original Score 7 **Robin Alway**

All the vehicles, including the school bus can be persuaded to roll over, *Dukes of Hazard* style.
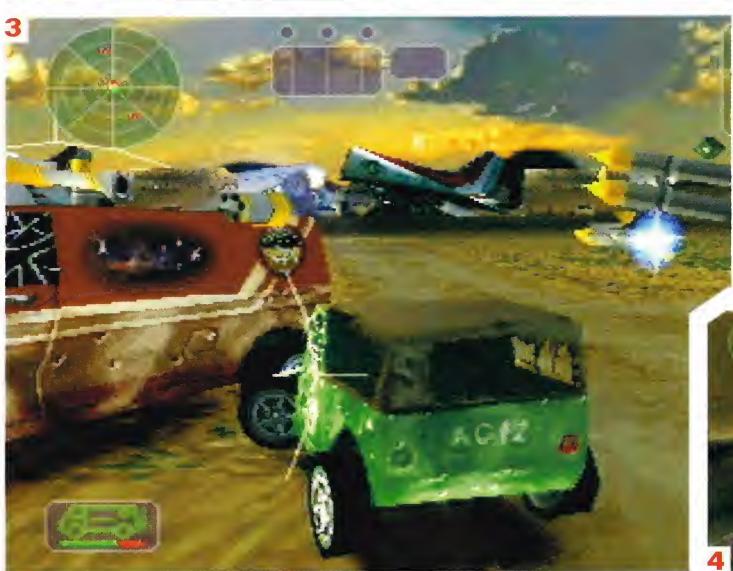
[1] Play with the Dual Shock and you'll feel every metal-ripping explosion. [2] How about a spot of piste-bashing? [3] Battles usually turn into this knd of automotive pile-on. [4] The Heads-Up-Display automatically targets the nearest vehicle, but you can manually override it. [5] The two-player mode can be played against a mate or cooperatively.

Official UK PlayStation Racing Special

VERDICT		SPECS		
■ GRAPHICS:	8	■ Handling:	5	
■ GAMEPLAY:	7	■ Speed:	6	
■ LIFESPAN:	6	■ Spills:	8	

NOW

Enjoyable in short two-player bursts and very sharp looking, but you'd be better off hunting down a copy of the still kosher *Twisted Metal 2*.

7

out of 10

99 MPH

Official UK PlayStation Racing Special

Platinum

[1] With a big arrow over it you'd think it was easier to hit.
[2] "It's death Jim, but not as we know it."

JIM
Points: 62

Destruction Derby

[1] A funny thing happened on the way to the scrapyard... [2] Smokin'.

■ PLAYERS:	One
■ PUBLISHER:	Psygnosis
■ FIRST RELEASED:	Oct 1995

mmediately upon its release, *DD* was loudly hailed by many as being the best thing since sliced bread. A somewhat dramatic over-reaction, because despite the graphical finery of this fiery knockabout racer, there is little to do beyond bash into cars in the admittedly rather exciting Destruction Derby itself. This event is set in a huge bowl where a gaggle of stock cars rev impatiently on the outer rim. Down drops the chequered flag and everyone hurtles towards the inevitable collision in the centre. You're awarded points for spinning opponents 180 and 360 degrees. However, and here's the rub, every time you get smacked, your car becomes less manoeuvrable and you find yourself limping around, smoke billowing, death rapping impatiently at your door.

Other gameplay options include Wreckin' Racing which affords points to the driver who does most damage to other vehicles, though you must complete a desired number of laps. Stock Car Racing is a bolt to the line – no collision points detected – while Time Trials is, not surprisingly, a race against the clock.

Much of the actual racing itself is a lottery, particularly when you're tackling the figure-of-eight circuits. You can take a hit at the crossroads, spin wildly and never know which way you were travelling in the first place. Darn it all.

So we've given *Destruction Derby* a right kicking. Now let's give it a chance to recover just a little of its self respect.

Despite a few forgivable glitches, *DD* is a good looker. As your car takes more and more of a pasting so it crumples accordingly, smoke eventually pouring from the engine. And even when most cars are on screen at once, the pace rarely drops significantly. Plus there's a link mode which allows those with two machines, two copies of the game and the requisite cable to join up and race – no great shakes really.

The sequel is a better racing game – as one would sincerely hope – and despite the £20 price tag, you're better off with the game next door.

VERDICT 6/10
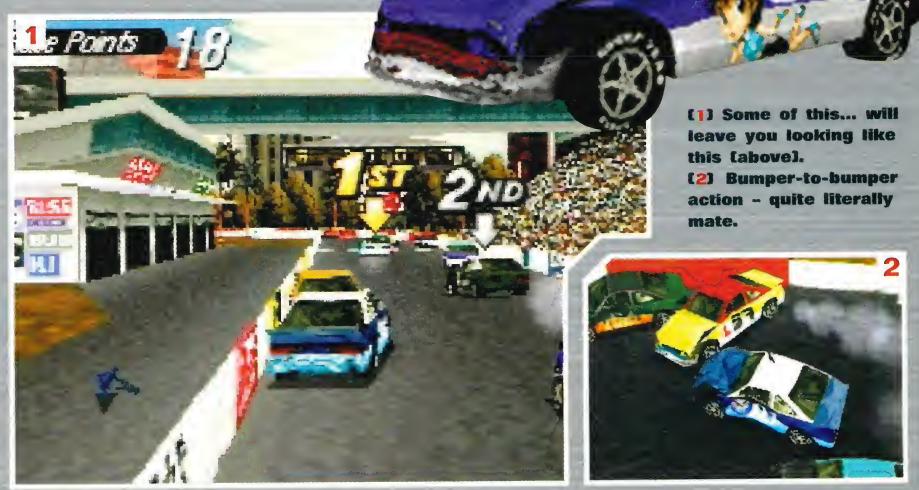
[1] Some of this... will leave you looking like this (above).
[2] Bumper-to-bumper action – quite literally mate.

[1] If you can't stay ahead this game will drive you up the wall. [2] One careful lady owner, good roller. [3 - 4] A variety of different racing modes provides numerous new challenges and excuses for a good crash.

Destruction Derby 2

[1 - 2] If your idea of a fun is smashing and crashing cars, then *DD2* has your name written all over it.

[1] Which way is forward is anybody's guess. [2] Look, it's another panel-bending pile on. And why not?

■ PLAYERS: **One**

■ PUBLISHER: **Psygnosis**

■ FIRST RELEASED: **Nov 1996**

A longside *Wipeout*, the original *Destruction Derby* was one of the games that helped establish the PlayStation as the top console and Psygnosis as one of its top publishers. However, despite the lovely 3D graphics and the immense fun to be had from smashing other cars to bits, *DD* was far from perfect (*as you will gather from next door's article*). The physics models of the cars weren't very realistic, the courses were all rather flat and boring, and the game suffered badly from numerous programming glitches and minor bugs. Fortunately, *DD2* was re-written from the ground up, resulting in a far superior game. The basic idea remains the same – a racing game in which you can earn points

for colliding with other cars and running them off the course – but it's a great improvement on the original. The graphics are faster and smoother, the cars drive and react more like the real thing, and there are more types of race and course to compete on.

The most obvious improvement is in the way it plays: the first version laid the emphasis on destruction, to the detriment of long-term enjoyment, this sequel has placed more emphasis on racing with high-speed thrills in Stock Car Racing and wider tracks and banked corners elsewhere for less frequent crashing.

Although there have been many racers released since, few have even attempted to combine arcade and simulation elements in the way that *DD2* does, let alone offer the same satisfaction that can be had from ploughing into your opponents at stupid speeds. In retrospect, it's perhaps a little too tough, but is still a unique and enjoyable game.

A huge improvement on the first *Destruction Derby*. Faster, smoother, more realistic. Still the purest form of mechanical carnage on offer.

VERDICT 8/10

[1] *DD2*'s the name, car carnage is the game. [2] "Infamy, infamy. They've all got it in f' me!" And with lines like that, you can't really blame them.

[1] There are three weather options. [2] Burn rubber with impunity... [3] Watch for interlocking wheels

[1] *F1* is still slick despite the years. [2] The cars are old. So are the tracks – but at Platinum price who cares?

Formula 1

- **PLAYERS:** One to two (link-up)
- **PUBLISHER:** Psygnosis
- **FIRST RELEASED:** Oct 1996

An enormous, realistic monster of a racing game, *F1* storms the chequered flag. This is THE racing title for the PlayStation." Or at least it was when we reviewed it way back in October 96. Is it really as long as all that since we first heard Murray's less than dulcet tones on the PlayStation?

You can now recapture the experience, because the original *Formula 1* is available on the Platinum label. At this point it's worth remembering the faults that

surfaced after *F1* was released – faults which may well have reduced the original score of nine had we been aware of them at the time.

In a nutshell, *Formula 1* is crawling with bugs. By far the most significant flaw is the idiosyncratic behaviour of some of the computer controlled drivers. Your team mate, for instance, often pops into the pits on every lap of longer races, scuppering your chances of a constructor's championship.

Still, that's the down side, but for your 20 quid you also get a huge upside. Naturally it's not as technically impressive in terms of graphics as when it appeared, but it was so advanced at the time that it more than holds its own in the current second rank of racing games.

Monaco, as you'd expect, is the best looking of all the circuits, and viewing its 50 to 60,000 polygon environments on the quick switching replay mode is a top notch visual experience, even today. Slick is the word we're looking for.

Any *F1 '97* owners who think this has nothing to offer should stop and think again. Thanks to the major safety changes made to most of the tracks at the end of the '96 season, the circuits offer very different challenges. All for a purple beer token.

Even after two years the original *F1* can hold its head high in today's busy racing marketplace.

VERDICT 8/10

[1] Mind your manners. The driver in front will always take the racing line. [2] Just a lapse in concentration and you'll be jumping the curbs. [3 - 4] The way they were - it may be two years old but it's so accurate you can lay claim to a piece of motor racing history.

[1-2] *MMV3* sports a super smooth 3D dynamic display making the racer infinitely better looking than its earlier incarnations.

1

2
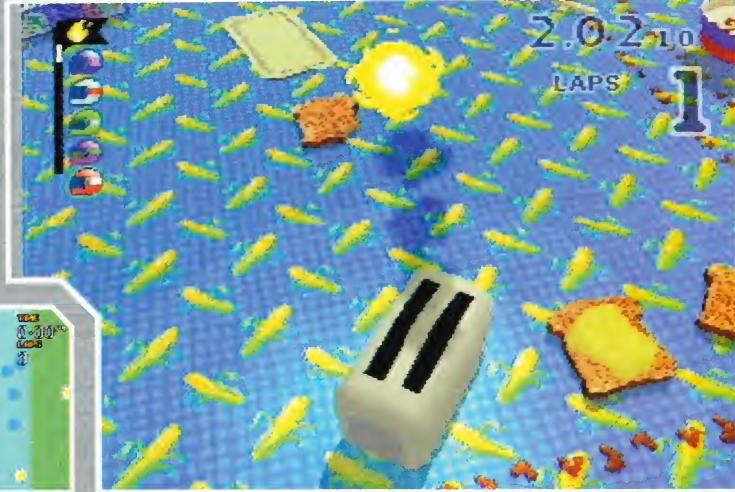
Micro Machines V3

1

2

3
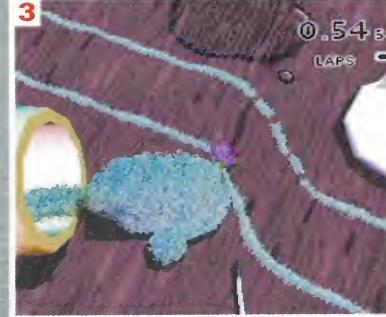
[1 - 3] With its huge variety of different vehicles and imaginative tracks, simple controls and compelling gameplay, *Micro Machines V3* is one of the best multiplayer games on the PlayStation. At the ridiculously cheap Platinum price, it's a must.

- **PLAYERS:** Eight
- **PUBLISHER:** Codemasters
- **FIRST RELEASED:** April 1997

Let's make a toast to a top racer that's now yours for only £19.99.

E ver since its 1990 release on Nintendo's 8-bit NES console, *Micro Machines* has been one of the most addictive and enjoyable racing games available. Since then, there have been versions for just about every console and home computer, including the 16-bit SNES and Sega MegaDrive, and the PC, all of which retained the incredible gameplay of the original. So when Codemasters announced that a PlayStation edition of the game was in the pipeline, expectations were high indeed. Amazingly, the finished game was even better than anyone could have hoped for.

Micro Machines is an arcade racer in which up to eight players can compete against each other in a wide variety of vehicles and an even wider array of courses. What makes it unique is that the vehicles you're driving are tiny toys, about an inch or two long, and the courses are to the same scale. Instead of Brands Hatch, you find yourself zooming around a breakfast table, avoiding mugs of coffee and cereal boxes.

In addition to the sheer playability of the previous versions, *MMV3* also features many new additions and improvements. To start with, everything is displayed in wonderfully detailed and super-smooth 3D polygons, as opposed to the top-down 2D of the earlier editions. As well as making the game

look infinitely better, this allows the camera to zoom and pan as you drive, giving a more dynamic feeling to the proceedings. Likewise, the sound effects have been completely revised, with excellent background noises and spot effects. Finally, there are more vehicles and courses than ever before – including miniature tanks, speedboats, helicopters, even hovercraft – and a new range of power-ups for foiling other drivers.

But above all, it's the incredible simplicity of the game that makes it so much damn fun, and that hasn't changed a jot.

At full price, *Micro Machines V3* was utterly superb. At the Platinum cost of only twenty quid, it's an absolute 'must have'.

VERDICT 9/10

[1 - 2] Codemasters have come up with more vehicles and courses than ever before for your entertainment.

1

2

[1] One of the real ones. It's probably just as well we can't get our hands on that. [2] The Lambo goes faster in a straight line. [3] A hedgehog's-eye-view of two modern classics. To die for. [4] You can drive at three different times of the day – morning, midday and evening.

Need for Speed

■ PLAYERS:	**Four**
■ PUBLISHER:	**Psygnosis**
■ FIRST RELEASED:	**May 1996**

Need For Speed was EA's first entry into the PlayStation racing game market and represented an attempt to combine the best elements of arcade games like *Ridge Racer* with more straight-laced driving simulations.

The game offers you the chance to take some of the world's fastest, most powerful, and quite ridiculously expensive cars for a spin around a variety of courses. On offer are automobiles from Lamborghini, Ferrari, Porsche, Chevrolet, Dodge, Acura, Mazda and Toyota, and a selection of different game styles. Single Race is just what it sounds like, while the Tournament option takes you to each course in turn.

You soon realise that some cars are more suitable than others for certain courses – Ferraris and Lambo for straight city streets and something like the Mazda for the twisty bits. But some of the cars are just too damn difficult.

The split-screen head-to-head mode allows you to race against a friend in real traffic, and finally the Time Trial pits you against the clock,

as well as being a good way of learning the tracks. Speaking of which, there are six courses on offer – Vertico Ridge, Alpine, Coastal, City, Autumn Valley, and Rusty Springs. Visually the game is very pretty, especially the cars themselves, which have been painstakingly reproduced from the real things and look gorgeous in all four views.

Unfortunately, despite all that it has going for it, *Need For Speed* is really beginning to show its age, and as a single-player game leaves a lot to be desired. It's still a lot better than the sequel, *Need For Speed 2*, and the split-screen mode offers a lot of fun, but there are much better racers available, and *Gran Turismo* does this kind of thing much better.

Nice looking cars and all-round good visuals with a good fun factor, but this racer is showing its age.

VERDICT 6/10

[1 – 2] In two-player split-screen mode you can barge along, generally abusing each other's machinery... as it were.
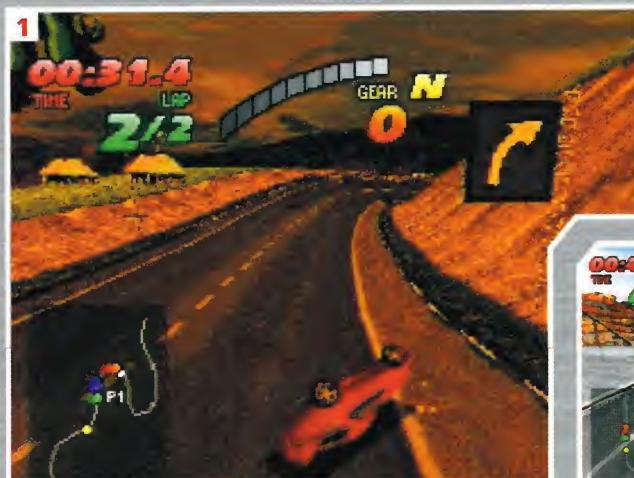
[1] That's no way to behave in such a fine piece of motoring machinery. [2] Nor is that. But full marks for the amount of rubber being left behind on the track.

[1] Looks like someone is going to have to make a call to their insurance company. [2] Do you wanna come for a ride in my yellow car?... whadda ya mean 'camp'. [3] Watch how the driver's head moves as you take a corner – each one is motion-captured.

[1] Track detail is impressive. [2] There are four circuits to choose from. This is the Japanese.

Porsche Challenge

■ PLAYERS:	**Two**
■ PUBLISHER:	**SCEE**
■ FIRST RELEASED:	**May 1997**

Porsche Challenge is a strange one. It was built up to such an extent that, when we finally reviewed it, it was something of a disappointment. After extended play, however, it really does start to grow on you, despite its limitations. The opportunity to drive a Porsche around a test track at 150mph is not one that should be passed up lightly, and the replication Sony achieved in its sim is admirable.

What really steers Porsche Challenge into big racer territory is its addictive two-player mode. A game like this can lose its attraction once you've completed all the tracks, but when you throw in a second-player option and the longevity increases dramatically.

The players are given a wealth of options, from Gladiators-style delayed starts to a very fancy catch-up mode. Admittedly the game loses a degree of its graphical finesse in this mode but it's worth putting up with. And after all, who could deny the satisfaction that is involved in watching your friend crashing into a wall, allowing you to zoom merrily past. If you want the ultimate head-to-head challenge you should try the confined twisty alpine track.

With 24 tracks available – including one at night, which has superb lighting effects – spread over four types of circuit, the racing is certainly varied, and there are plenty of alternative views. Handling is an art which develops over a long learning curve, and it's ultimately more satisfying than most graphics-led racers.

That said, Porsche Challenge has since been surpassed: of the Platinum racers on the market, it has dropped now that TOCA and V-Rally are out

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A competent racer, but it lacks the 'wow factor'. Then again, at 20 nuggets it's worth a gander.

VERDICT 7/10

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[1] Each of the cars has a different colour and driving style. [2] Overtaking maybe a little too easy.
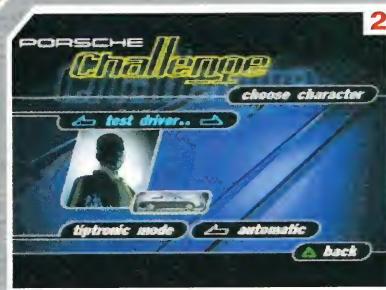
[1] You've got the inside line, what are you waiting for? [2] If you win all 24 tracks you get to race in the Test Driver's car.

1

2

[1 – 2] Win all four races and you'll be doing them backwards. [3] If you go fast enough you can actually hit this helicopter.

1

3

2

Ridge Racer

■ PLAYERS:	One
■ PUBLISHER:	SCEE/Namco
■ FIRST RELEASED:	Nov 1995

In these heady days, it's sometimes difficult to believe the impact that *Ridge Racer* had on videogaming. In the dark days of yore, it was almost impossible to believe that Namco's splendid coin-op could translate to home console with the minimum of fuss. But *Ridge Racer* did. It was the first ever game released in Japan for the PlayStation, but even two years down the line its spirit remains undimmed. As one of our correspondents so eloquently stated in the recent racing game feature (*PSM*21), 'the role of the driving game, throughout its relatively short life, has been that of proclamation and spreading the word'. Certainly, *Ridge Racer* announced the PlayStation's arrival to an expectant world, a world tiring of 16-bit games.

And hey, you people, *Ridge Racer* is still great. We know it's only got one track but what are you going to do about it. Eh? EH? Powersliding *Ridge*'s cars around corners remains one of the PlayStation's greatest thrills. Although you can finish the game after a few days solid racing, because the mechanics of the thing are so spot-on, you always find yourself returning for another spin. And it's equally as good as *Rage Racer*, better even than *Ridge Racer Revolution*.

Unlike many driving games that come to mind, *Ridge Racer* feels really good. It provides simply unbeatable gaming experience, never mind it's age. if you haven't got it hunt it out while you can. Classic.

At the budget price this is simply one of the best racers on the PlayStation. Still.

VERDICT 9/10

The cityscape beckons.

1
REPLAY

2
COURSE SELECT — T.T.
MISSION SELECT — AT
CAR SELECT
SOUND SELECT — 3

ACCELERATION
GRIP
MAXIMUM SPEED
CAR #13
13" RACING

3

4

[1] If your replay shows you in the middle of the road then you're doing okay. [2] Get yourself a nice set of wheels, well, you know, a whole car, but a nice one. Like this one. [2 – 4] An empty track looms up as your opponents burn off into the distance.

(1) Destroy all the Galaga 99 ships and you get to race with these cute little bunnies – they're cars actually. **(2)** When 'Spinning Point' flashes up it's your signal for mad manoeuvres. **(3)** And what's more, this game sports a big green chopper. No really.

(1) Careful how you go, *RRR* will give you tunnel vision. **(2)** Heihachi's scowling mug is plastered all over the circuit.

Ridge Racer Revolution

■ PLAYERS:	**One**
■ PUBLISHER:	**SCE/Namco**
■ FIRST RELEASED:	**May 1996**

Love or hate it, but there's no doubt that *Ridge Racer* was one of the 'killer apps' that ensured the PlayStation's early success and helped to make it the world's most popular games console. A pixel-perfect conversion of the massive arcade hit, visually the PS version blew the socks off every other racing game at the time. Okay, it only had one track, but who cared when it looked this good?

Ridge Racer Revolution, the much-anticipated sequel, was something of a disappointment at the time, though. The graphics were an improvement, running faster with fewer glitches, and there were now three tracks to choose from. Beyond that, however, *RRR* seemed to offer little more than the original. With hindsight, it suffered more from people's inflated expectations than from its own failings. The Artificial Intelligence of the computer cars was much improved, the gameplay just as addictive as *Ridge Racer*, and the graphics a real step forward. In all, it was a damn fine game, for all that it was more *Ridge Racer 1.5* than *Ridge Racer 2*. But two years in this industry is a light year for progress and now it's been surpassed, by the likes of the third in the series, *Rage Racer* (see page 90).

It isn't the best of games and neither is it the worst of games, it's in games no-man's land.

VERDICT 8/10

(1) Pretty in pink. **(2)** The powerslide is even more difficult to control than in *Ridge Racer*. Cheers Namco. **(3)** This will be familiar scenery for those who've played the first *Ridge Racer*. **(4)** Do you think they're trying to get us to buy something?

Official UK **PlayStation** Racing Special

197 MPH

Platinum

Road Rash

- **PLAYERS:** One
- **PUBLISHER:** Electronic Arts
- **FIRST RELEASED:** July 1996

Road Rash is one of EA's classic games from the days of 16-bit consoles. At its heart it's a motorbike racing game, but with a predictable twist – the races are illegal, taking place on normal roads, complete with traffic and police cars.

What's more, the competitors have no qualms about knocking each other off their bikes with fists, feet, or any weapon that come to hand. You get to blast along the public highway racing 14 other motorcyclists who might just take a swing at you with a chain if they so feel inclined. And there are five scenic routes to complete, from busy metropolis to the spectacular scenery of the Pacific Highway.

In the city there is all manner of fun to be had – jaywalking pedestrians to crush, cars and vans to avoid and you'll almost certainly endure brown-trouser incidents at the all-to-frequent crossroads.

Out in the country you can use all four lanes to concentrate on kicking, punching and chain-lashing the other chaps in the race.

Winning a race earns you cash prizes, which you can spend on buying bigger and better bikes. It is a simple formula, but incredibly addictive, thanks to finely tuned gameplay and smooth graphics.

Sadly, despite excellent versions for the Sega MegaDrive and Super Nintendo, the PlayStation conversion just doesn't capture the same fluid feel and frantic action of the earlier releases. Riding and fighting becomes mundane rather than exciting, and despite the more powerful graphical capabilities of Sony's machine, the game doesn't even look very good.

Since Road Rash's original release over a two years ago, racing games of all kinds have continued to be launched and evolve on the PlayStation, and RR now looks dated. Without the addictive gameplay of the SNES and MD versions, there's little to justify even the reduced Platinum price.

This one is long past its sell-by date now and was no great shakes when first released.

VERDICT 5/10

[1] Cue Volvo estate. [2] The Armaco's only there to stop you denting the scenery. [3] Get the wrinkly. [4] Ready or not, here I come. [5] Eat this, biker fiend.

Player 1 124 10 03. 4 M

Rhonda 13 02. 0

[1] Where is he putting his hand, doesn't he realise he's shattering the illusions of thousands of would-be bikers? [2] Look some tasty scenery. [3] Single yellow and a blind corner. How dangerous could that be? [4] There's one in the eye for little Biker Billy.

Player 1 153 12 01. 0 Killjoy

Player 1 145 7 04. 4 M

Player 1 104 1 02. 8 Kelly

TOCA

[1] Reality is key in *TOCA*. The cars, tracks and drivers are meticulous copies of those in the British Touring Car championship.
[2] Overcook it in the corners and you will be summarily punished with a spin. [3] Other drivers will seek revenge if crossed.

On the CD

■ PLAYERS:	**One/Two**
■ PUBLISHER:	**Codemasters**
■ FIRST RELEASED:	**Nov 1997**

As a precursor to the mighty *Gran Turismo*, TOCA managed to pack in all the delights of real cars, real tracks and life-like handling back in Christmas 1997. It's still a stormer too. What this title offers is serious racing. None of yer namby pamby arcade handling, no crashing, too easy, piffle here.

This is adult entertainment, in turns delicate and spectacular. The motors are all real production models (as real as the pukka racing ones get), while the tracks are meticulously copied from actual venues. What makes TOCA *Touring*

Car Championship is its attention to detail, accuracy, and realism – all of which contribute to the game's superb playability. And in a Platinum only improvement the game now offers full Dual Shock rumblings and improved analog support.

The cars bunch together, squeezing for position, so you gun the throttle, but then a shambolic skid and you're quickly flailing on the grass. Reality is key. If you annoy a competitor, by driving him off, he may well repay the compliment later on in the race. The gameplay really is spot on. Throw in the pre- and post-race commentary from *Top Gear's* Tiff Needell and we are talking essential entertainment.

Those in search of throwaway arcade daftness, take your driving goggles elsewhere. Connoisseurs however will enjoy feeling the pinch of *TOCA's* racing harness, but fortunately not its new Platinum price.

A top buy for the cash-starved motoring fanatic.

VERDICT 9/10

The marketing men want you to think it's like the ones in the showroom. But it's a thoroughbred racecar.

[1] *V-Rally*'s most famous feature is its highly twitch controls - one false finger flip and you're racing in reverse. [2] A bevy of motors is laid on. [3] All this and split-screening too. [4] Magnificent redraw and speed complete the package.

V-Rally

[1] An open road and a mate to race against. Deep joy. [2] This is the picnic cheat, find a deserted spot, park up and sit in silence for two hours.

■ STYLE: **Rally racer**
■ PLAYERS: **One to two**
■ PUBLISHER: **Infogrames**
■ FIRST RELEASED: **July 1997**
■ ORIGINAL SCORE: **9/10**

O nce upon a time (just last summer actually) everyone and their PlayStation-owning dog was raving about *V-Rally*. Since then the PlayStation has been blessed with more top quality racing games than it has any right to, as this magazine has been trying to point out, and some have changed the face of videogame racing forever. So should *V-Rally* be squashed into a small cube of metal and tossed idly aside?

Well no. *V-Rally* is still very much in a class of its own. *Colin McRae* might be the top of the rally heap now, but it's a true rally sim in that you race round the tracks on your tod trying to get the fastest time. *V-Rally* is a completely different story - the CPU drivers are nasty

and they'll do their very best to stop you nudging in front of them. Thankfully you can give as good as you get and it's not uncommon to see cars flying all over the shop if things get rowdy.

Being a rally game, the controls aren't your standard *Ridge Racer* affair - a single heavy-handed push of the D-Pad can send your car careering into the side of the track. At first it's incredibly frustrating and you'll wonder how you're supposed to keep up. But after a few sessions you should get the hang of it and things should become much more enjoyable. You'll see the worldwide variety of courses (45 in fact), experience the excellent weather effects and drive any one of 12 cars. The Toyota Corolla WRC 98 is

exclusive to the Platinum edition and what's more, Infogrames has introduced Dual Shock control. But while the vibrating is nice enough, using the stick is a waste of time as the analogue control hasn't been implemented too well.

Still, *V-Rally* is a spunky little driver that has withstood the test of time astoundingly well. Drivers, start your engines...

Still standing proud after all this time - we're guessing the 'V' stands for Viagra...

VERDICT 8/10

Split the screen vertically and steer your car through the slot.

[1] A two-player, sun-spot fight off. [2] Don't worry, it's just a tunnel, whatever you're thinking of it'll be fine, just relax.

Wipeout

[1] The weapons are much less important in Wipeout than in 2097. In fact, you're better off steering clear of them completely. [2] Tunnels are a prominent feature. [3] The in-sled view is frighteningly unstable.

■ PLAYERS: One

■ PUBLISHER: Psygnosis

■ FIRST RELEASED: Sep 1995

Wthe first time you play *Wipeout*, like *V-Rally* or *Formula 1*, you will crash. The difference between *Wipeout* and these two other Platinum classics is that if we came back a couple of days' play later Monaco would be mastered and you'd be tearing round the Corsican country lanes but a familiar, if slightly less regular, THUNK! would still be emanating from the Wipeout corner. This uncompromising difficulty level is at once the game's single flaw and its ultimate strength. Just when you've had enough, when you're ready to throw the joypad down in disgust

and call it a day, you get it.

Unlike *Wipeout* 2097 the power-ups you can pick up as you rocket around each circuit are mostly irrelevant. The turbo is good for a bit of extra speed and the shield wards off enemy attacks but the weapons are often more annoying than useful. Fire at a sled too close to you and the vehicle will stop dead leaving you little option but to rear-end the beggar and lose all your valuable momentum. Experienced *Wipeout*ers ignore such fripperies, activating power-ups as soon as they get them and concentrating on the much more important business of taking the correct line around each and every corner to attain that magic full speed lap. The key to Wipeout's longevity is that after the initial breakthough, you do indeed get better and better, finding that you can push your sled harder than

any wheeled racing vehicle, virtually standing it on its head to make the tightest corners. This is where the real thrills are to be had, swinging into a corner at a suicidal angle and coming out the other end unscathed with a dirty great grin spread across your face. That's when you know you've been hooked. It's no use resisting, you're in for long sleepless nights packed with adrenaline and the neon blur of a strange futuristic world speeding past.

But should you go for the original or *2097*? They're both bloody great but we reckon the second game has the edge. But then, for forty quid you can do a lot worse than buy them both.

A true classic, and a must for your collection.

VERDICT 8/10

You don't say. There's a huge jump coming up, as always.

Wipeout 2097

(1) These orange lights are the spray laser. **(2)** Thrilled to bits. **(3)** Link mode and you're losing. Hit the right speed-up patches and you'll right up with him. **(3 – 5)** Fast-paced future-action, from Liverpool. Now that doesn't happen everyday does it?

PlayStation Racing Special

On the CD

■ PLAYERS:	**Four**
■ PUBLISHER:	**Psygnosis**
■ FIRST RELEASED:	**Oct 1996**

Wipeout is a futuristic racing game with an array of undulating circuits upon which *Star Wars*-style hovery craft bash along as quick as you like. The ships actually bob on air a few feet above the track and *en route* you can pick up missiles and rockets and things. You oscillate wildly through corners of varying degrees of difficulty. Terribly hard, and often frustrating. But jolly fun, all the same – the sheer speed of the thing is immense.

We've played the sequel, *Wipeout 2097*, an awful lot, so perhaps it's time for an office straw poll. Here's a selection of comments from artists, writers and a rabble of hangers-on at the game's initial release: "This game has finally convinced me that a two-player PlayStation link is a Good Thing." "The two-player game is the most addictive thing ever." No, don't sit on the fence. "It feels slicker than the first one, but the link-up mode is what really makes it". Okay. "I've never played because I can't get near the machine." Shucks. Sorry.

You may have garnered that we've been playing *Wipeout 2097* on the two-player link-up. 'Ah but,' we hear you cry, 'you've got two copies of the game, two PlayStations, two tellies and a link cable. This isn't relevant for most of us.' Sure.

But we must say that *Wipeout 2097* is The Best Link Game for the little grey chap. On the easiest course, Talon's Reach (set in 'a major Canadian industrial complex'), after about half an hour you can pretty much learn where every power-up is and how to take the best racing line. THIS COURSE HAS TAKEN THREE DAYS OF OUR LIVES; it's taken the 'just one more go' syndrome to dangerous extremes.

Choons: Future Sound of London, Fluke, The Chemical Brothers, Photek, Underworld, The Prodigy and Cold SToRaGE. *Firestarter*, by The Prodigy, is a 'banging tune' which 'larges' it big style and the rest bleep along pleasantly.

Wipeout 2097 certainly comes recommended. Those who couldn't get to grips with the original will find its successor far more accessible. As a two-player game it has to score a maximum 10, it's THAT great.

Amazing in two-player and plain fantastic for the lone pilot.

VERDICT 9/10

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(1) Like a blue-arsed fly. **(2)** The Vector, Sagarmatha course is set in the Tibetan mountains. **(3)** *Wipeout 2097* can give you a big rush.

Andretti Racing

Split between two types of car racing – American stock cars and Indy Cars the aim in both is to build a career for yourself and win as many races as possible. Experts will delight in the fact that you can tinker around with the car's settings before each race and fine-tune gear ratios and so on, while novices will be pleased to hear they can just jump into the cars and start racing.

As well as the option to choose from three different viewing positions the player can use the game's picture-in-picture feature to keep an eye on the lead car.

In two-player, there's the usual split-screen, head-to-head facility but there's a further multi-player option that allows four players (on two linked PlayStations) to compete simultaneously.

In any case the most crucial part of the gameplay is the pitstops, you can only hold so much fuel and have to weigh stops carefully. So there is a stategy angle wedged in there. This, along with the cut-scene commentators, looked to be taking racing games in a new and slicker direction presentation-wise, but it lacked in the gameplay department.

It didn't run away with any honours on release and that was quite some time ago.
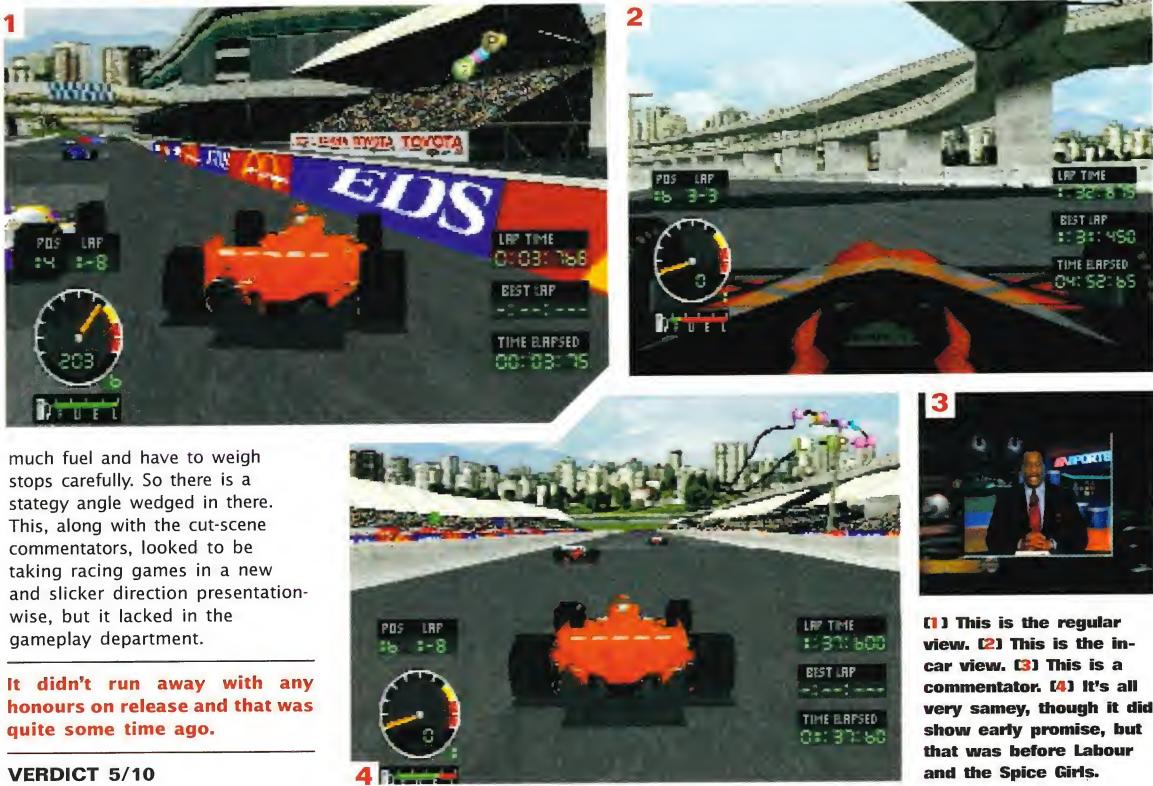
VERDICT 5/10

[1] This is the regular view. [2] This is the in-car view. [3] This is a commentator. [4] It's all very samey, though it did show early promise, but that was before Labour and the Spice Girls.

Auto Destruct

The humourous pun of the title refers to the player's ability to destroy just about anything in the city. One mission for instance is to protect some innocent shoppers being terrorised at a shopping mall, but nobody seems to care if you destroy half the rush hour traffic and take out a few pedestrians on the way.

The action's OK, and the car, though unwieldy, can be made to slide round corners after a bit of practice but the missions are tedious. Racing around is satisfying enough, but interest in the game wanes quickly due to the similarity of the missions and the simplicity of the cityscape. Unlike *Felony*, although there is a greater play area, there is no real detail to the street. Most buildings are just boxes with different textures. San Francisco seems to be amazingly flat; there are only a few 'hills' and they are simply made up of long stretches of flat road at an angle to the horizontal – not terribly inspiring. Although *Auto Destruct* isn't stunning, or compulsive there are some thrills to be had.

Sadly, any thrills are short-lived – keep an eye out for *Driver's* release (see p44).

VERDICT 6/10

[1] Rocket booster power-ups give you the chance to leap over water. [2] You need no power-ups to drive through warehouses.
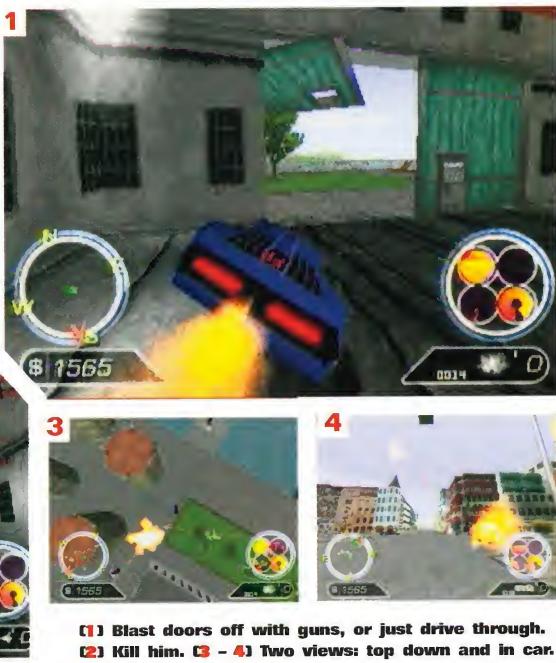
[1] Blast doors off with guns, or just drive through. [2] Kill him. [3 – 4] Two views: top down and in car.

Ayrton Senna Kart Duel

[1] If you bump into other karts they'll cry out in comical fashion. **[2]** Tracks are short and unspectacular. **[3]** Hitting the kerbs will bring you to a stop.

■ PLAYERS: **Two**

■ RELEASE DATE **Feb 1997**

■ PRICE **£44.99**

Karting sims can be superb. The tight and twisty nature of the tracks, coupled with the vehicles' responsiveness and ability to powerdrift round corners, can make for an exhilarating gaming experience. The operative word being 'can'. For anyone with fond memories of Senna (the opening lap of Donington '93 in close-to-monsoon conditions, for example) this is a crashing disappointment. Nothing is what it should be.

From a set of clunky interfaces through to completely inappropriate sound (you might be driving a kart but you're listening to juggernauts), bgm that wouldn't be allowed near a Stateside daytime soap and woefully inadequate graphics, this game simply reeks of extreme shoddiness.

It's not as if there's decent gameplay either. The kart handling is way off, resembling a *Wipeout* racer more than anything else. Couple that with collision detection which is a law unto itself and that parts of the circuit have a habit of disappearing, and you have a deeply frustrating racing experience.

Nice license. Shame about the rubbish game.

VERDICT 3/10

[1] Don't be fooled – the graphics are not up to much. **[2]** The young Ayrton was driving before he could walk. Apparently. **[3]** A marshal gives a flag a good telling off.

Ayrton Senna Kart Duel 2

■ PLAYERS: **Two**

■ RELEASE DATE **Sept 1998**

■ PRICE **£44.99**

No mid-season losses of form to worry about with this celebrity-endorsed racer. Whereas the likes of Geri Spice or a fragile ankled footballer can scupper the most costly star-endorsed games, Ayrton Senna's name is carved in granite. Not to mention covered with flowers, after his tragic death in a Formula One crash.

As if slapping his name across a game, and a karting game at that, for a second time wasn't in bad enough taste, there's very little in *Kart Duel 2* that could be described as a fitting memorial to the Brazilian driving genius. Unlike the man himself, there's a complete lack of sophistication on offer. Simply choose one of the three bog standard modes – championship, time trial or two-player – and prepare to be thoroughly unimpressed.

Graphically, the game's a nonstarter too. The circuits are roughly textured and full of glitching road surfaces, and your fellow karters are blocky close up and positively Lego-like at a distance.

Accept that this is a fast, basic drive and you might get a smattering of enjoyment from it. But the whole thing is overall a second rate driving experience.

Even people who sleep under Ayrton Senna duvet covers would be ill-advised to invest in this.

VERDICT 4/10

[1] You can't beat the real thing. **[2]** This is a fast, basic drive, and nothing more. **[3]** Sadly the gameplay is uninspiring. **[4]** Don't hit the curbs. You'll stop. **[5]** Circuits are roughly textured.

Cool Boarders

[1] For a quick start tap the jump-button up to the first jump. [2] No stopping for tea. [3 – 4] Things that go "bump" in the night.

- PLAYERS: **Two**
- ORIGINAL RELEASE **Sept 1997**
- PRICE **£44.99**

This is an opportunity missed. Because this is one game which could, and probably should have been very good. Alas it doesn't seem to have been produced by snowboarders, nor even by PlayStation enthusiasts. It is quite fun, true, but the graphics are not of the best quality and essentially the game is limited, with too many of the so-called options being nothing more than cosmetic.

What you get here is downhill snowboarding on any one of three 'pistes', with a choice of eight sets of clobber and six boards. The courses vary in difficulty, it doesn't matter what clothes you wear, and only two different boards are worth using – the fastest alpine board for time trials, and the hottest tricks board for freestyling.

You amass points by pulling 'radical big air' manoeuvres – i.e. doing acrobatic stunts in the air when you jump. When you crash you're told by an annoying man how "way uncool" you are, which tends to get a bit boring. You can turn him off in the Audio Configuration option, where you might also want to turn off the music too. There are eight tracks to choose from but again they're no great shakes. Without the music you are left with only the sound effects of your snow wake – a white noise track that increases in volume as you turn.

Graphically, the background mountain ranges are impressive while the characters look like they were made in the *Blue Peter* studio.

It's not a terrible game though – a clean Time Trial can be quite exhilarating and there is satisfaction to be had pulling off tricks. There's just not enough depth to it. It wouldn't have taken much to think up eight names for your boarders, instead of calling them male/female: types one to four and it would be great to have a race option too.

With a little more thought, time and effort this would have won through, (see *CB2*, page 84).

VERDICT 6/10

[1] Looks like a face plant may be imminent. [2] A snowy Stonehenge?

Crime Killer

- PLAYERS: **Two**
- RELEASE DATE **August 1998**
- PRICE **£44.99**

The design brief behind *Crime Killer* is fine in principle. Each of its 16-odd levels offers a new set of roads, where you take control of a police vehicle – a car, plane or bike – and pursue criminals, destroying or immobilising them as directed. However, the physical realisation of this simple idea is less appealing.

The game's generic futuristic locales are unsophisticated and drab; similarly, the design of its vehicles leaves a lot to be desired. In one instance, you're invited to destroy a juggernaut only to discover that the anticipated road-hogging monstrosity is just a small collection of polygons. More of a "juggernot", then. *Crime Killer* is packed with such anticlimaxes.

Crime Killer's car chases would be rather more engaging if its driving mechanics were a mite more sophisticated. Fair enough, that the game's developer, Pixelogic, was not attempting to create a racing sim, but it's rather too simple to control the three vehicles on offer. Strangely, they appear divorced from the roadways they negotiate, gliding with consummate ease around corners. Braking is a near-instantaneous procedure, and crashes lead to only a momentary loss of velocity.

In short, you don't "drive" as such. When pursuing criminals, left and right controls are used to align your fire with the rear of your current assailant. Collisions mean nothing, and the tunnel-like nature of *Crime Killer's* maps means that players are rarely, if ever, taxed by any particular corner or obstruction.

The game's one-player mode is of passing interest only because of its rigid level-based structure. Each new stage has a script, with set events occurring on cue. Two-player mode is better as players can go head-to-head in a basic exchange of firepower, or a less interesting collect-more-objects variant – but why should you favour this over other PlayStation games with a multi-player option? You shouldn't.

If it's car chases you want, stick with *Need For Speed 3* or *Grand Theft Auto.*

VERDICT 4/10

[1] This one looks like he's under the influence. [2] Two-player mode is better... but that's only relative. [3] Frustration-fuelled strafing is frowned upon. But it's also understandable. [4] Explosions galore. [5] If reading this doesn't send you to sleep, nothing will.

Explosive Racing

[1] Don't expect any *V-Rally*-style realism here. [2] Some of the cars have familiar lines. E-Type? [3] This may hurt a little.

■ PLAYERS: One
■ RELEASE DATE Sept 1997
■ PRICE £34.99

Though strictly speaking the sequel to *Burning Road*, *ER* hasn't got a thoroughbred lineage or licence upon which to base its marketing strategy – its programmers had to find some other catch, and to that end they've decided to pretty well neglect realism – often seen as a must for racing games – interjecting some simple slam-bam fun to lift it above the crowd. Forget finding perfect racing angles around corners, and never braking in anything but a straight line; *Explosive Racing* is about keeping your thumb rooted firmly to the accelerator button and heaving your car, bike, or truck around some of the wildest race circuits you'll ever see.

But *Explosive Racing* isn't the next 'must have' racer in the way *V-Rally* was; it doesn't present the right kind of challenges. By ditching the realism and forcing you to slide around the tracks as if they were all ice, the game hampers the fun aspect which it tries so hard to promote. You'll tire of it inside of a week so don't bother with it unless you can't understand this review.

Fast and graphically good but the lack of realism means there's not enough fun to last.

VERDICT 5/10

[1] All-out pedal to the metal racing. [2] The basic replay option. [3 – 4] Two vehicles and two big chins.

Hardcore 4X4

■ PLAYERS: One
■ RELEASE DATE Dec 1996
■ PRICE £44.99

Mechanically, *Hardcore 4x4* is phenomenal. There are six different vehicles from which to choose, each most suited to a particular course or surface – of which there are six also. They've all got these huge wheels and enormous suspension to help them over the treacherous terrain and they look realistic, too.

The vehicle controls are pleasingly responsive and despite the terrain you always feel that you've at least a chance of negotiating the circuit. Those that find the steering TOO responsive can adjust it accordingly. One of the shoulder buttons even boosts your revs for when you need that extra kick in tight situations. And it all rattles along at a fair old pace, too.

The half a dozen courses throw up a variety of challenges – be it on sand or snow, rock or mud. They're a little bit tight in parts and overtaking opportunities are limited but some of the visuals are splendid.

Hardcore 4x4 is a strange game in that it looks and feels fine, yet it really isn't much fun to play – at least, not as exciting as you'd expect. Despite the wealth of visual detail, it leaves you feeling a tad cold with its iffy weather and tight courses.

Spectacular, original and accomplished. Yet... strangely dissatisfying.

VERDICT 7/10

[1] Passing is difficult on the tight courses. [2] Hit the sides too often and your performance drops. [3] Believe it or not, that is snow. [4] You won't find a way through there, but you can always try pushing your luck... and the others.

Hi Octane

■ PLAYERS:	Two
■ RELEASE DATE:	Jan 1996
■ PRICE:	£39.99

Hi-Octane is, to say the least, a little on the disappointing side. It has more go than a tortoise, it has to be said, but when you compare this to the likes of *Wipeout* – and we have to compare it to SIE's effort – it's like playing a Ford Probe off against a Citroën 2CV. Very little correlation.

Hi-Octane is a straight port of Bullfrog's PC version but has undergone a number of tweaks graphically as well as mechanically to bring it up to 'speed' for the PlayStation. Like *Wipeout* the graphics engine is polygon based and boasts an impressive number of detailed texture maps for added depth and feel.

The surprising factor is that although *Hi-Octane* is impressive in its own right, with a distinctive 3D styling unique to Bullfrog (a 3D graphics engine which has now become infamous thanks to the award-winning PC game *Magic Carpet*), *Wipeout* looks infinitely better and is certainly more detailed. What's more, *Wipeout* runs faster than a cheetah on speed.

Fundamentally there is very little difference between the two in terms of gameplay. Each is a 3D racer with chase or first person views and the player is armed with weapons capabilities, speed-ups, and there's plenty of worthy competition. *Hi-Octane* varies in that you are required to also concentrate on fuel, ammo, and armour depletion, making the game a little more tactile.

As a whole the game itself has been well planned and executed; but – and this is the unfortunate part – there's no escaping the fact that *Hi-Octane* was preceded by the far superior racer, *Wipeout*.

A good game but ultimately doesn't match up to SIE's *Wipeout*, let alone *Wipeout 2097*.

VERDICT 6/10

[1] This is the Chernobyl track – hence the post-apocalyptic sky. Presumably. [2] The multi-coloured caterpillars are speedos and other useful info. [3] Yes those are bullet holes in your windscreen. [4] Restless natives retaliate. [5] The split-screen two-player mode.

Jet Rider

■ PLAYERS:	Two
■ RELEASE DATE:	March 1997
■ PRICE:	£44.99

The near future: people no longer race Grand Prix cars or horses. No. They fly around on exceptionally dangerous, very fast hover bikes instead. Which is where you come in. Pick a bike, strap on a helmet and get ready to roar around a course with 19 other mad bikers.

Jet Rider was an out-and-out race game – there was no shooting at each other, no upgrading your bike, it was just a matter of getting around the courses as fast as you could. And it did that reasonably well at the time.

The courses are challenging and intricate, with lots of jumps and tight bends to negotiate, and the bikes are ultra-manoeuvrable, having extra tight turns available by using the shoulder buttons and a kind of electromagnetic lasso that whips you round hairpin bends and which is activated with the circle button. All this meant that you needed to take a long time to get to know each course well, and there were always opportunities to improve your speed. Add the fact that the 20 different bikes available all had very different handling behaviour and you can see that we were talking about a fairly complex beast here.

There are 10 courses in all, and each is very different from all the others. You start with access to just three, but by winning a championship you gain access to more. Some of the courses are 'suicide' courses, which are basically two very tight turns at each end of a long straight, others are much longer affairs, and one particularly devilish one is made up entirely of ice blocks. The graphics are superb throughout, especially in the moody bayou courses, and the overall feel of the game is very impressive.

But *Jet Rider* didn't quite have the edge-of-your-seat sensationalism that made *Destruction Derby 2*, *F1* and *Wipeout 2097*; the leaders in this genre. However, if you fancy a complex, hard-to-master racing game with a great two-player mode, you should get the sequel.

This was a challenging racer but it has now been well and truly eclipsed by *Wipeout 2097*.

VERDICT 6/10
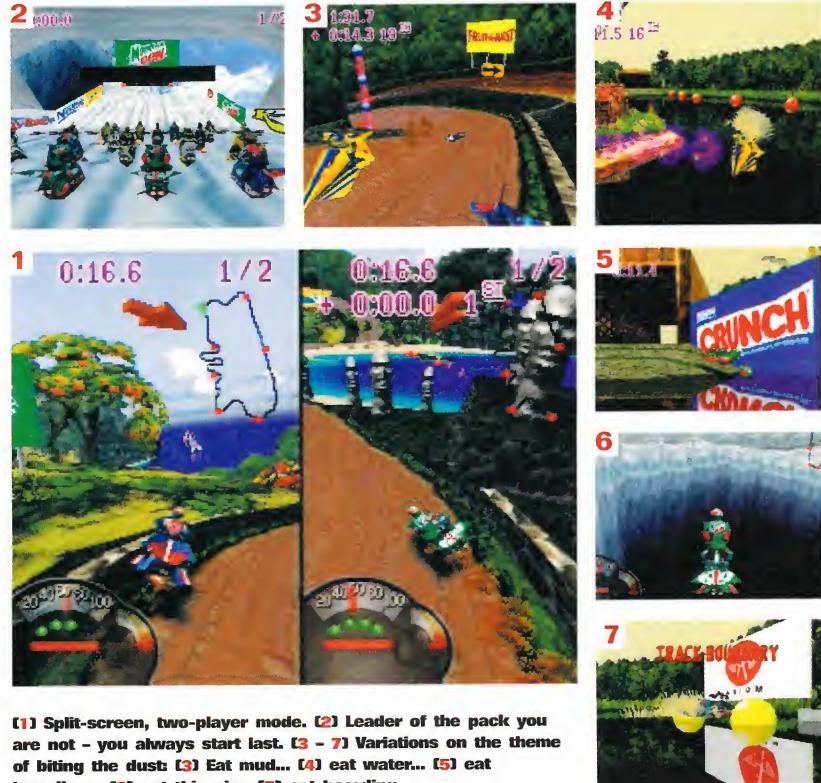
[1] Split-screen, two-player mode. [2] Leader of the pack you are not – you always start last. [3 - 7] Variations on the theme of biting the dust: [3] Eat mud... [4] eat water... [5] eat hoarding... [6] eat thin air... [7] eat hoarding.

Jeremy McGrath Super Cross '98

[1] Tell that bystander to get his hands out of his pockets. [2] Here comes another sharp one. [3] Split-screen two-player action.

- **PLAYERS:** Two
- **RELEASE DATE:** July 1998
- **PRICE** £39.99

Motorcross in this country has a cult following compared to the mass popular support for such sports as F1 and British touring cars. But in the States it's big. So Acclaim was tempted to test the waters with *JMSC '98*, endorsed by seven-times AMA champion Jeremy McGrath.

You can select your contestant from 24 riders on offer. The courses are set within indoor arenas, canyons and a host of suitably rugged outdoor locations, and each comprises tight corners, huge hills and dusty surfaces.

But while there is much to recommend *JMSC '98*, its overly simplistic controls let it down.

A strong premise is let down be sub-arcade controls. If more work had gone into the feel of the control system, this would have been a surprise hit.

VERDICT 6/10

Impact Racing

- **PLAYERS:** One
- **RELEASE DATE:** July 1996
- **PRICE** £44.99

Impact Racing invites you to drive very quickly along a succession of courses firing laser guns at the cars in front and dropping the odd mine while you're about it. This would appear to be the sum total of the action. Everything moves at feverish pace and when you swoop over hills your car takes on board 'serious air', as they might say in a snowboarding magazine, perhaps.

It's quite fun for a while but sadly *Impact Racing* becomes an all-too predictable adventure after a short while. Steer, shoot, drop mines and collect power-ups. That's about it, we're afraid.

About as average as half marks can be really.

VERDICT 5/10

[1] Too slow, you need to drop some mines. [2] The whole game runs at a good pace. [3] You race through city, mountain and space on 12 tracks.

Motor Mash

- **PLAYERS:** Four
- **RELEASE DATE:** Dec 1997
- **PRICE:** £44.99

Motor Mash is a 'viewed from above' multi-player racing sim very similar to the highly successful *Micro Machines* series. In case you didn't know, (and not everybody has played *Micro Machines* – it just seems like it) a 'viewed from above' racer is just as it sounds. Instead of seeing the action at track level you view a race from above as if hovering in a helicopter. The action is fun, fast and furious, with vehicles zooming off into the distance, and others colliding and sliding-off all over the place.

It's a highly polished game built by people who have obviously done this kind of thing before. The 3D theme worlds are beautifully realised and interact well with the gameplay (try driving off a cliff or straying too close to a car-eating plant). The camera work is also smooth and intelligent, the cars handle quite superbly, and there is plenty to test your driving-at-speed skills to the limit. Sadly though it lacks originality and the ability for multi-player fun.

Not ground-breaking but its pace, sense of humour and overall quality hold it together.

VERDICT 6/10

[1] One of the game's six theme worlds. [2] Get to the front any way you can. [3] And it's very similar to *Supersonic Racers*.

Need for Speed 2

[1] The graphics look good. [2] Even the intro featuring real cars looks good. [3-5] But *NFS 2* just doesn't deliver.

■ PLAYERS:	One
■ RELEASE DATE:	June 1997
■ PRICE:	£44.99

This is another sequel that isn't even an equal. EA's original *Need For Speed* managed to rack up a score of 8 out of 10, but this racer doesn't live up to its promise. The graphics are lush and rich, but the whole thing just happens too slowly and there's no sense of being in control.

The six courses you get are dotted with some glorious scenery and you get to choose from eight of today's greatest road racing machines to play with. But the handling is a disappointment – it's just far too sensitive – and the tracks are either too easy or too difficult with nothing in between.

This road-racer just doesn't cut the mustard.

VERDICT 5/10

Peak Performance

As in *Ridge Racer*, winning races in *Peak Performance* is largely down to mastering the power slides.

■ PLAYERS:	Two
■ RELEASE DATE:	March 1998
■ PRICE:	£44.99

Peak Performance, JVC's latest racer, attempts to stand out from the crowd by offering more depth and options than the rest. In addition to the fairly standard one player, two player and Time Trial options, you can select to tune your car, or even create a new course to race around. Although the design system is limited, it's nonetheless great fun to play around with. Best of all, you can save your creations to a memory card, allowing you to swap cars and courses with friends.

Sadly, when it comes to actually racing, *Peak Performance* is a bit of a let-down. The general handling and feel is quite arcadey, relying heavily on powersliding. This in itself is no bad thing, but although it's similar to *Ridge Racer*, it simply isn't as responsive and fun to play.

Despite all the neat touches and fancy design systems, the racing itself just isn't exciting enough.

VERDICT 5/10

[1] *Peak Performance* is ironically average. [2] Unfortunately you can't smash up any of the cars - even your own.

Rapid Racer

■ PLAYERS:	Two
■ RELEASE DATE:	Nov 1997
■ PRICE:	£34.99

There are few frills in *Rapid Racer*. It's basically *Ridge* (or *Rage*) *Racer* on water, though you can run into power-ups which provide you with much-needed turbo boost. You get a choice of three speed boats before the race and then earn the right to bigger, more powerful and more dangerous craft. Likewise you progress to a greater selection of courses as your ranking increases.

Our major gripe with *Rapid Racer* is the actual handling of the speedboats. You don't really feel like your boat is sitting in the water, reacting to it. Collisions with the bank are a bit random too – sometimes you bounce off with a splash and others you get thrown through the air. Collisions with other boats are also poorly handled.

Rapid Racer is well-designed and nicely coded but it only really has novelty value to differentiate itself from other, better racers.

VERDICT 4/10

[1] The banks are difficult to avoid. [2] Beware unwanted passengers. [3] The boats are so difficult to control it's a real achievement when you do overtake. [4] AI is hard to beat.

Speedster

[1 – 3] It handles badly, it's got odd views and it grates on your nerves... how did this ever get out?

■ PLAYERS:	**Two**
■ RELEASE DATE	**May 1997**
■ PRICE	**£39.99**

Speedster uses a curious viewing angle of almost directly overhead and this perspective can be played around with by zooming out until you're in a racing game where the track is vertical. It's a weird feeling.

You're given a choice of eight vehicles in two classes – Performance cars (sports cars) and Heavy Metal vehicles (dune buggies and pick-up trucks) – with eight tracks to race on, either singly or one after the other in a Championship mode.

Muscling your way past the other cars is what *Speedster*'s all about and this is complicated by the fact that your car takes damage through contact with obstacles. This doesn't diminish your performance, but once you've filled your small damage meter your car conks out, which means you've got to inch your way past the other guys while trying not to make too much contact. It's tricky stuff, especially on one of the higher skill levels. One thing that bodes ill is the fact that the replay feature is more fun than the game.

Poor control, weird views and ill-conceived gameplay. Tsk, eh?

VERDICT 5/10

Street racer

■ PLAYERS:	**Eight**
■ RELEASE DATE	**July 1996**
■ PRICE	**£39.99**

UbiSoft brought us an updated version of their SNES and Mega Drive hit, *Street Racer*. But rather than slip in polygon characters or try to impress us hardened hacks with motion-captured nonsense, Vivid Image (the game's developers) took a humbler route by keeping the sprite-based design for the game's characters, and concentrating their powers on improving the tracks.

Now while the programmers let rip somewhat, with 60 frames per second it still looks awful and you get the feeling that the track moves around the car, which sticks in the gullet a bit.

The game also tried to impress us with a range of kooky characters; a bimbo, a monster a witchdoctor... hmm... impressed?

Obviously the desire here was to take on *Micro Machines* and *Mario Kart* and win. It doesn't.

The early defence for this was 'wacky-ness' not any more.

VERDICT 4/10
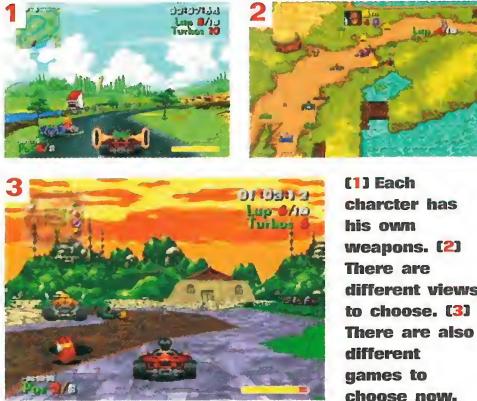
[1] Each charcter has his own weapons. [2] There are different views to choose. [3] There are also different games to choose now.

2 Extreme

[1] Skate in Italy. [2] Board in Switzerland. [3] Bored in minutes more like – give it a wide berth.

■ PLAYERS:	**Two**
■ RELEASE DATE	**March 1997**
■ PRICE	**£44.99**

2xtreme is a sequel, of sorts, to *ESPN Extreme Games*. But, 18 months on, this wasn't as good as its predecessor. Essentially you hurtle along roads, shimmy past obstacles, stick one on your opponent and zoom through as many gates as possible to earn bonuses and cash.

But the courses aren't nearly as nice as before. There are 12 in total, split between four locations – Los Angeles (skateboarding), Las Vegas (roller blading), Africa (mountain biking) and Japan (snowboarding). And they're all a tad bland or rather too similar to the originals to bring a broad grin. The only real difference is the inclusion of the snowy courses but this appears to an afterthought.

There's a split-screen, two-player option and you can race seasons for cash in three different difficulty classes. Unlike the original, there's no split disciplines in that you can't race a bike against boards or blades. Shame. No, *2xtreme* is competent and it's fun but not worth hard cash.

Another tale of an aged veteran that was todge on last year.

VERDICT 4/10

VMX Racing

■ PLAYERS:	**xx**
■ RELEASE DATE	**July 96**
■ PRICE	**£34.95**

What a load of stupendously lo-res, sub-arcade, ultra-pixellated, collision-detection missing, pop-up riddled old slurry. From the heinously scanned 2D spectators to the heavy metal soundtrack, *VMX Racing* is as close as the PlayStation got to an early, poor Saturn game

The game then. Seven tracks, four riders and some 125/250cc motorbikes. A fine premise but in practice, terrible. First off, straying off the track by just one pixel will send your bike tumbling. Hit a blade of grass? You're off. Run over a tiny flag? You're off. Harsh and indeed ludicrous stuff but don't worry, the Anaheim Supercross bowl enables you to jump between lanes, just as the game also enables you to drive through sheds and 'land' mid-air. Or mid-tree.Immensely annoying.

Why are you still reading this?.

VERDICT 3/10

GAMES DIRECTORY

A TO Z

HERE IT IS – THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE LISTING OF PLAYSTATION RACING GAMES EVER! WE RATE 'EM, WE SLATE 'EM, WE BET YOU HAVEN'T PLAYED 'EM ALL!

A

AIR RACE
PSM 26 – *7/10* – Racing/flight sim
Pleasantly surprising. Obvious faults, but robust, smart and fun-filled.

ANDRETTI RACING '97
PSM 11 – *7/10* – Racing sim

Varied, fun, but slightly clunky racer. Pales in comparison to *Ridge Racer*.

AUTO DESTRUCT
PSM 29 – *6/10* – Racing /strategy
Not all bad, but far from excellent. Bones of the game are good, but it soon becomes repetitive.

AYRTON SENNA KART DUEL
PSM 15 – *3/10* – Racing game

Terribly produced and exploitative mess of a karting game. Stay away.

B

AYRTON SENNA KART DUEL 2
PSM 36 – *4/10* –Kart racing
Low quality, simplistic racer. Rough, ropy, clunky.

BURNING ROAD
PSM 12 – *5/10* – Racing game
Bland arcade-style title which aims at *Ridge Racer* and falls way short.

C

CHILL
PSM 32 – *6/10* – Snowboarding sim
Proficient snowboarding game, but it lacks anything innovative.

✪ CIRCUIT BREAKERS
PSM 33 – *9/10* – Racing game
Addictive, clever, considered top-down racing. Best with four players.

✪ COLIN MCRAE RALLY
PSM 35 – *9/10* – Arcade racer/racing sim
Racing fans must buy it, go on, off you go...

COOL BOARDERS
PSM 16 – *6/10* – Snowboarding sim

Interesting, amusing but seemingly rushed attempt at a trendy sport.

COOL BOARDERS 2
PSM 29 – *8/10* – Arcade racing
Detailed sports sim, supercool arcade racer and wish-fulfilment par excellence, a vast improvement on *CB1*.

CRIME KILLER
PSM 35 – *4/10* – Racing/shoot 'em up
Unimaginative idea and poor driving mechanics.

CYBER SPEED
PSM 2 – *3/10* – Futuristic racer
Wipeout, but dull and sadly pointless. The graphics are passable.

D

DESTRUCTION DERBY
PSM 1 – *7/10* – Racing game
Exhilarating crash-and-smash racer let down by a few key faults.

✪ DESTRUCTION DERBY 2
PSM 13 – *9/10* – Racing game
A total visual and gameplay overhaul of the original title. Brilliant stuff.

E

EXPLOSIVE RACING
PSM 24 – *6/10* – Racing game
A cartoon racer which tries hard to be different, sacrificing playability.

F

FELONY 11-79
PSM 26 – *7/10* – Racing game
Inadequate in many ways, but its entertainment value masks its flaws.

✪ FORMULA 1
PSM 11 – *9/10* – Racing sim
A realistic and immensely playable racer. Essential in its day.

✪ FORMULA 1 97
PSM 24 – *9/10* – Racing sim
Superior in almost every regard to the 1996 original. A motorsport landmark.

FORMULA 1 '98
PSM38 – *7/10* – Racing sim
It's no better than *F1 '97* and it's no better than the original *F1*.

FORMULA KARTS: SPECIAL EDITION
PSM 27 – *7/10* – 3D racer
Great little racer. Works well as a sim and an arcade one- or two-player.

G

✪ GRAN TURISMO
PSM 32 – *10/10* – Racing sim
Takes on every other PlayStation racer and sends them squealing to the pits.

H

HARDCORE 4X4
PSM 14 – *7/10* – Racing game
An original off-roader which suffers due to tight, restrictive courses.

HI-OCTANE
PSM 3 – *6/10* – Racing game
Another futuristic racer which tries to match *Wipeout* but lumbers behind.

I

IMPACT RACING
PSM 9 – *5/10* – Driving/shooting sim
Limited arcade racer which excites initially, but soon becomes tiresome.

J

JEREMY MCGRATH SUPER CROSS
PSM 35 – *6/10* – Motorbike racing
Let down by sub-arcade controls. Could have been a hit.

JET RIDER
PSM 17 – *7/10* – Racing game
A complex, quirky racer which lacks the sensationalism of *F1* or *Wipeout*.

JET RIDER 2
PSM 30 – *8/10* – Racing game
Great bikes , lots of imagination, but the course design isn't up to scratch.

M

MEGAMAN BATTLE & CHASE
PSM 25 – *3/10* – Cartoon racer
Basically just a bad clone of *Mario Kart*.

✪ **MICRO MACHINES V3**
PSM 18 – *9/10* – Racing game
Cute, addictive racing action.

MONSTER TRUCKS
PSM 17 – *6/10* – Racing game
The lack of true driving 'feel' makes this more mouse than monster.

MOTOR MASH
PSM 27 – *6/10* – Driving game
Pace, sense of humour and overall quality revitalize an old idea.

MOTO RACER
PSM 26 – *8/10* – Motorbike racer
Gets the adrenaline pumping, and keeps it flowing.

MOTOR TOON GP2
PSM 12 – *8/10* – Racing game
Gorgeous visuals and a wealth of courses but the handling's a bit shaky.
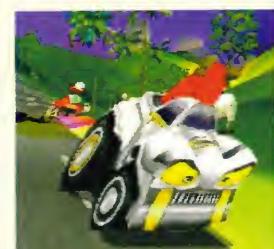
MOTORHEAD
PSM 32 – *8/10* – Arcade racing game
A true adrenaline rush of a game, with a daring bundle of interesting ideas.

N

NASCAR RACING
PSM 14 – *4/10* – Racing game
Crusty 'serious driving sim' which seriously fails to convince.

NASCAR '98
PSM 27 – *6/10* – Wreck-heavy race sim
An improvement over *NASCAR*, weighed down by poor handling.

NASCAR '99
PSM 40 – *510* – Wreck-heavy race sim
This series just isn't getting any better is it? Still just plain dull, despite three attempts, will they learn?

✪ **NEED FOR SPEED**
PSM 5 – *8/10* – Racing game
Rough-around-the-edges racer with an undeniably high fun factor and the first of the new generation of racers.

NEED FOR SPEED 2
PSM 20 – *5/10* – Racing game
Includes all the faults of the first title, but removes the fun element.

NEED FOR SPEED 3: HOT PURSUIT
PSM 33 – *7/10* – Racing game
A great game if you love car chases, with the added bonus of an excellent two-player mode.

NEWMAN HAAS RACING
PSM 31 – *8/10* – Racing sim
A great IndyCar adaptation of Psygnosis' *F1* engine.

P

PEAK PERFORMANCE
PSM 30 – *6/10* – Racing sim
Ambitious, but let down by the very average game engine and the everyday graphics.

PENNY RACERS
PSM 14 – *5/10* – Racing game
Cutesy racer which lacks that elusive driving 'feel'. Abundantly average.

PHAT AIR EXTREME SNOWBOARDING
PSM 36 – *5/10* – Snowboard simulation
Jerky and disjointed controls provide little game satisfaction.

✪ **PORSCHE CHALLENGE**
PSM 19 – *8/10* – Racing game
Combines the exhilaration of an arcade jaunt with the realism of a sim.

POWER BOAT RACING
PSM 34 – *5/10* – Racing sim
Tricky to start playing with jerky graphics – a disappointing game.

R

✪ **RAGE RACER**
PSM 21 – *9/10* – Racing game
Fabulous arcade racer with perfectly tuned gameplay and slick visuals.

RALLY CROSS
PSM 21 – *7/10* – Racing game
Immensely frustrating at first, but does offer a considerable challenge.

RAPID RACER
PSM 25 – *6/10* – 3D racing game
Well-designed but more of a novelty than a thrilling racing experience.

RAY TRACER
PSM 21 – *7/10* – Racing game

A fine arcade-style experience, which doesn't last long enough at home.

✪ **RIDGE RACER**
PSM 1 – *9/10* – Racing game
The quintessential PlayStation racer. Smooth, playable, unforgettable.

✪ **RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION**
PSM 6 – *8/10* – Racing game
Improves the visuals a little, adds a couple of new features, and that's it.

ROAD RAGE
PSM 16 – *5/10* – Racing sim

Another dodgy *Wipeout* clone which fails to generate tension or excitement.

ROAD RASH 3D
PSM34 – *7/10* – 3D racing/fighting
Above-average arcadey racer.

✪ **ROAD RASH**
PSM 3 – *6/10* – Bike racing game
Formulaic racer that sounds like a medical complaint and is less fun.

ROCK AND ROLL RACING 2
PSM 36 – *4/10* – Futuristic racer
Insipid, hollow, soleless fare. Brain implodingly frustrating. Horrid.

S

SAN FRANCISCO RUSH
PSM 37 – *4/10* – Arcade driving
Forget this and buy a decent racer.

S.C.A.R.S.
PSM 36 – *8/10* – Racing
A great racing game that gave *Circuit Brakers* a run for its money.

SPEEDSTER
PSM 19 – *5/10* – Racing game
Refreshingly different, but lacks the necessary speed and drive.

STREET RACER
PSM 13 – *7/10* – Racing game
Polished cartoon graphics and good, honest gameplay mark this racer out.

SUPERSONIC RACERS
PSM 11 – *8/10* – Racing game
Ultra-competitive eight-player cartoon racer. Cute and playful. Like a kitten, though the graphics are getting more and more dated as time marches on.

TEST DRIVE 4
PSM 28 – *7/10* – Racing game
Gorgeous-looking, fast and fun, but it lacks the necessary depth.

TEST DRIVE: OFF ROAD
PSM 23 – *6/10* – Racing game
The one-player game is okay, but the two-player option is poorly designed.

TEST DRIVE: 5
PSM 40 – *8/10* – Racing game
A disappointing racer which doesn't provide the thrills you expect of it.

✪ **TOCA TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP**
PSM 27 – *9/10* – Racing simulation
Excellent: realistic and fun; great graphics and sound and fantastic handling.

✪ **TOCA TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP 2**
PSM 40 – *9/10* – Racing simulation
Excellent: twice the tracks, greater frame rate, and backed by the growing importance of the licence it represents. It can't fail.

TOMMI MÄKINEN RALLY
PSM 35 – *6/10* – Rally racer
Disappointing when compared to other racers.

TOTAL DRIVIN'
PSM 25 – *8/10* – Racing game
A huge variety in tracks and cars but doesn't quite work as a single game.

TWISTED METAL
PSM 2 – *7/10* – Driving game
A crash and smash treat for two players, but rather dull for one.

✪ **TWISTED METAL 2**

PSM 17 – *9/10* – Car beat 'em up
A veritable one-off. Stuffed with detail and thrilling, addictive action.

✪ **V-RALLY**
PSM 21 – *9/10* – Racing game
Fine visuals and a plethora of tracks and cars combine in this tricky racer.

VIGILANTE 8
PSM34 – *7/10* – Driving combat game
Enjoyable in two-player bursts, and sharp-looking. *Twisted Metal 2*'s better, though.

VMX RACING
PSM 33 – *3/10* – Motorbike racing sim
The pits – infuriating and tedious.

WIPEOUT
PSM 1 – *8/10* – Racing game
Dizzying pyrotechnic racer set in the near-future. Marvellous soundtrack

✪ **WIPEOUT 2097**
PSM 12 – *9/10* – Racing game
Improved gameplay and brilliant link-up option keeps this ahead of rivals.

WRECKIN CREW
PSM34 – *7/10* – Arcade racer
Pleasant change from simmy games. Not taxing, but fast and frantic.

2XTREME
PSM 17 – *6/10* – Skating sim
Almost unique as a sequel: takes the original and makes it a bit worse.

QUIZ: THE ROAD TEST

ARE YOU A BOY RACER OR A LADY DRIVER RESPONSIBLE FOR 85% OF SMALL INSURANCE CLAIMS

Now you've immersed yourself in all things fast and competitive, it's time to check out your credentials. So we've brought together a metaphorical barn full of racing teasers to test your knowledge. And just to make it *un poco* more *interessant* The Final Round comes with a prize (if you get it right and are pulled out of a hat... or at least your answers are pulled out of a hat... the answers you send in that is... if you send them in), so the answers to that section will not be included at the end, otherwise we'd have too many correct answers to fit in the hat... not that we actually pull them out of a hat anyway.... we don't have a hat to hiss in.

To kick off with, the first two rounds deal specifically with the real racing world to check out whether you're a hot shot or a grease monkey.

ROUND ONE. Drivers start your engines

1 Jim Clark, the English motoring legend, died in 1968 racing for which team?
2 Which Tyre manufacturer entered the Formula One stage for the first time in the 1997 Season?
3 He's famous for pasta sauce, salad dressing, acting in films and he's one half of a highly successful American CART racing team. Who is he?
4 What does Testa Rossa translate as?
5 Which 60s motor racing star is the only man to have been World Champion on both two wheels and four?
6 How did former F1 World Champion Damon Hill's motor racing father Graham Hill die?
7 What rally car manufacturer's team will Colin McRae be leaving Subaru to join next year?
8 Who are popularly know in motorsport as the Tifossi?
9 Which Brit and former F1 World Champion competed occasionally in this year's TOCA British touring car championship (he's a Brummy)?
10 Which city's racing circuit did F1 supremo Ayrton Senna die at?

ROUND TWO. And another thing...

Why this round is separated from the first is a mystery that confounds quiz setters the world over, for this too concerns itself with racing in the real world. If you can spot any obvious differences between Round One and Round Two write in and we'll send you our love.

1 Which British car maunufacturer had a string of victories at the Le Mans 24-hour GT race in the 1950s?
2 Over what distance was the famous Italian race, the Mille Miglia raced?
3 What was first name of the founder of Ferrari?
4 What Brit two-time winner of the RAC rally, who also made the Ford Escort famous in the '70s, died eariler this year?
5 Which driver has been the F1 World Champion the most times?
6 Which club owns the Silverstone racing circuit?
7 If a marshall at a racing track waves a blue flag at you when you are racing what does it mean?
8 Which F1 manufacturer also makes one of the fastest road legal production cars in the world?
9 Which driver won this year's British touring car championship?
10 Who is Murray Walker's co-commentator, once a F1 driver himself?

ROUND THREE. Back from reality

We've tested your racing knowledge but now it's time to hunker down and throw in the PlayStation wildcard, how good is your game knowledge?

1 What game is traditionally launched by Namco on 3 December?
2 Which game boasts the following courses: Corsica, Australia, Indonesia and Sweden?
3 Reflections, the team behind *Destruction Derby 1 & 2* are currently working on a new driving title set in the '70s and pulling inspiration from classic movies like *Bullitt*. What is the name of the game?
4 Which game features power-ups and weapons that allow you to, amongst other things, spray oil, grow crazy legs on your car and cover your mates with bizarre lumps of fog.
5 What driving game did the team responsible for *Gran Turismo* first produce for the PlayStation?
6 Who released the dire *Tommi Makinen* racing game?
7 Name the five teams in *Wipeout 2097*.
8 *Street Racer* was created by an individual whose last name is Dinc, what's his first name?
9 Which was the first platinum game fully compatible with the Dual Shock?
10 Which racing game was the first Dual Shock compatible game released on the PlayStation in the UK?

FINAL ROUND: The Screentest
OK, you've had your fun, now it's time to get serious. Here are 10 (count 'em) screenshots from a selection of PlayStation racers, all you have to do is name each and every one and send the answers, on a postcard to: Quiz Official PlayStation Magazine Racing Special, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, B&NES, BA1 2BW

THE VERDICT: SCORES ON THE DOORS

0-10
Oh dear, you're reading the wrong magazine aren't you? You need a good cross-stitch mag – if you were a car, and we're betting you're not, you'd be a post-joyride Capri, burnt out on the edge of some waste ground.

10-25
Mediocre man, you're a middle of the road, straight as a die, a predictable-as-you-like 2CV, you even have the remnants of a Nuclear No Merci sticker from your previous french teacher owner. Bad cold starter too.

25-30
Slipping up a gear now, but still not getting anywhere fast, you are a salesman's company car, a Ford Probe most likely. You see yourself as sleek and sexy but you look and sound like a right dick.

30-35
Here we go now, you're a funk soul brother, ahem, you're a BMW 3 series in bright yellow with the largest stereo this side of Essex, a pair of knickers hanging out of the ashtray on your way to *Sasha's* niteclub.

35+
A winner every time; fast, sharp and very, very red, you mate are a Ferrari, you're not of course but if you were a car you would be. Actually you're either mad, or Murray Walker, which is quite a close call.

ANSWERS

CONTENTS

THERE ARE CERTAIN WAYS TO DRIVE A CAR THAT MEAN YOU WILL END UP AT THE HEAD OF THE PACK, AND NONE OF THEM INVOLVE THE HIGHWAY CODE. HOW PECULIAR...

BEAT THE

THE ART TO QUICKER CORNERING

You don't need us to tell you that even next door's grandmother can drive in a straight line; the straight is one part of the track where your speed is solely governed by your car's performance limitations. Corners are a different story and technique is everything, sorting out the wheat from the chaff, especially when the performance of the cars is similar. The keys are momentum and traction and how to conserve the most of both all the way through the corner.

The principal school of thought supports the 'Slow In - Fast Out' approach to cornering speed (this is also a leading theory amongst one-night stand specialists, but that's another thing altogether...) and the 'Out-In-Out' approach to road placement. Confused? Here are some cornering examples we prepared earlier.

1: SLOW IN – FAST OUT

On the way into a curve you decelerate and once past the vertex on the way out you accelerate again. The idea here is to slow the car just long enough to be able to turn into the corner and then reaccelerate as soon and as hard as possible out the other side. You probably already know what happens if you don't get this right – anything from going straight on through the metaphorical (or actual) hedge, to losing too much traction mid-corner and spinning your car out.

2: OUT – IN - OUT

Quite simply, road positioning for cornering is all about straightening the curve as much as possible by using the full width of the circuit. As
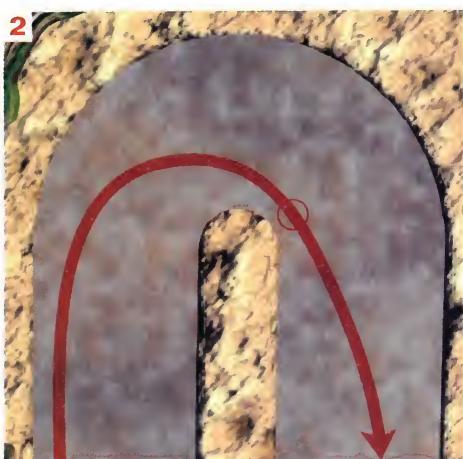
shown, you approach it starting as wide as possible before turning in and clipping the apex (surprisingly where you do this is known as the 'clipping point') Once past the apex you head for the outside of the track as you exit. By straightening the curve like this you're making a less severe change of direction and keeping as much speed through the whole corner.

3: SETTING THE CLIPPING POINT AFTER THE APEX

That's right, now we've told you the theory we're going to say that actually, in reality the best way of cornering is a little different. With most racing cars the fastest way to corner is by

setting the clipping point after the apex, giving you a straighter exit from the corner so that you can accelerate harder for less loss of traction.

The importance of acceleration during the later half of corners.

Both Slow In – Fast Out and Out-In-Out techniques hinge on the importance attached to speed in the latter half of a corner rather than the first. This is in part due to the advantage it gives in a racing situation where the car that accelerated the fastest through the exit of a corner will be able to overtake or stay ahead of its rivals in the straight bit of track after the corner.

4: CHICANES

The last curve of one of these double whammies is always the most important one to take the

right speed and line through - in other words, getting the straightest line through the second curve of the set will mean you can accelerate harder and earlier away from the chicane.

5: COMPLEX CURVES
Consider complex curves such as those illustrated as one integrated compound, picking your line and clipping point so as to maintain the highest speed through the corner. Complex
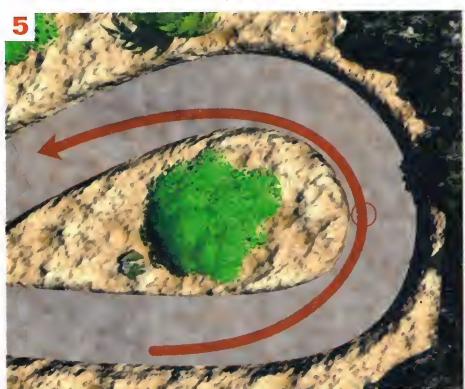
curves with more than one radii (a double bend in English) are often best taken as one curve with a clipping point at an imaginary apex between the two curves.

6: GENTLE CURVES
Pretty obvious this one. When possible, take the straightest line through gentle bends – this is always the shortest and fastest route to take.

7: THE WHOLE CIRCUIT
At the risk of stating the obvious, join a load of different curves and straights and you get a circuit: so the approach to any particular corner will be greatly influenced by what comes immediately before it and after it. It's the whole lap time that really matters – funny that.

8: PERFORMANCE EFFECTS
If you upgrade your car, or change its set up then the optimal driving line will alter for any corner. Not only the speed, but the handling characteristics, tyre grip etc. will all influence the optimal line.

ADVANCED CORNERING TECHNIQUES
Not just steering alone, but combining steering inputs with throttle control can be used for different cornering styles.

1: FOUR WHEEL DRIFT
This is achieved by oversteering during deceleration on the way into the corner. As the back of the car starts to break away, the rear wheels start to skid and the nose of the car heads towards the inside of the corner, neutralize the steering and add power. This will take the car through the corner with all wheels sliding. This technique is suitable for rear-wheel drive and four-wheel drive race cars.

2: TACKING IN
This technique is unique to front-wheel drive cars. Enter a curve straight, then cut power and steer around the curve at the same time. The car will dive into the corner as you back off the gas. Straighten out and accelerate going through the corner.

3: COUNTER STEERING OR OPPOSITE LOCK STEERING
The term means to steer the wheels against the turn of a corner. If a car enters the corner too fast, the rear wheels could start to skid, resulting in a spin. To stop this, steer into the direction of the skid. This technique, on the track is normally used to prevent a car from spinning and is not for enhancing cornering speed. On loose surfaces, such as rally special stages, this is the way to get round corners while keeping the power on.

4: WEIGHT LOAD SHIFT ACCORDING TO POWER APPLIED
Pretty obvious this one. When running at a steady speed, the load is divided between the car's front and rear wheels in a fixed ratio. During deceleration, more of a load is put on the front wheels because of inertia, resulting in sharper steering response. Under acceleration, where more of a load is put on the rear wheels, a slower steering response results. Both the previously explained techniques of four-wheel drift and tacking in use this weight load shift.

5: THE INSIDE LINE
If you've got it, stick to it and hog it all to yourself. It's always the fastest way through any corner and if you've got it then no one else can have it, can they?

Counter-steering is better known as 'hanging the tail out'. For track racing this will lose you traction and time but in rallying it's often the only way for tight corners. But most of all, it's fun.

CIRCUIT BREAKERS

Speed boost: On the circuit selection screen, press ◎ ✕ △ and ▢ simultaneously.

Upside-down: To activate Upside-down mode, press L2 R2 ↓ and ✕ simultaneously.

Have All 32 Tracks: Pause the game then select the Sound option and highlight the Effect option then press both left shoulder buttons.

Reversed mutliplayers: Press SELECT and ✕ and ▢ as the cars are going into the tunnel.

Bean Cars: As soon as the circuit has loaded and the countdown started, simultaneously press the ◎ and ← buttons.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY

Enter these codes as your driver's name.

Enable all tracks	OPENROADS
Enable all cars	SHOEBOXES
Green jelly car	BLANCMANGE
Fog mode	PEASOUPER

Four wheel steering	TROLLEY
Rear wheel steering	FORKLIFT
Turbo mode	MOREOOMPH (press SELECT to activate)
International Track and Field style control Turbo jumps	BUTTONBASH KITCAR (press SELECT to activate)
Customizable replay	DIRECTORCUT
Nicky Grist drives	BACKSEAT
High-pitched Nicky Grist comments	HELIUMNICK
Faster frame rate	SILKYSMOOTH
Driver on right side in cockpit view	WHITEBUNNY
All tracks at night	NIGHTRIDER
Metallic cars	TINFOILED

F1

Bonus track: Go to Options where it says Practice, Qualify and Race. Press and hold SELECT

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then quickly press: ← ◎ ◎ △ △ ◎ ↑ and →. Now you should see the message 'BONUS TRACK ACTIVATED'.

Buggy mode: Go to Options then press and hold SELECT, then quickly press: → ↑ △ ← ↑ , ▢ and ✕

Motorbikes: Go to Options and press and hold SELECT, then press: ↓ ↑ ◎ △ → ↑ ◎ and △

Lava track: Go to Options and press and hold SELECT then quickly press: ▢ ◎ ↑ → → ◎ and ✕

F1 '97

Entering the cheats in this version is much easier. Simply go to the player name screen (Select Driver) in the Grand Prix mode and change it to the cheat code you want.

Background music and new SFX	Swap Shop
Helicopter viewpoint	Zoom Lense
Murray and Martin graphics	
Frogs instead of raindrops	Box Chatter
Four extra tracks	Cats Dogs
VR Style graphics	Billy Bonus
Huge tyres	Virtually Virtual
Wipeout 2097 mode	Little Weelz
	Pi Man

WIPEOUT

Access Rapier Class: For the fastest vehicle avaible in the game highlight One Player on the startup screen then hold down L2 R2 ← START and SELECT. With these still held press the ✕ button to move to the craft screen where the new one will be available.

Hidden Track Firestar: For the nastiest track everighlight the One Player option as before then down and keep held down L1 R1 → START and SELECT then press ✕ to go straight to the course select screen.

Repeat the lap: Perform an about face over the finishing line and the CPU ignores the most recent lap giving you loads more time to catch up the bloke in front.

WIPEOUT 2097

Challenge 1
▢ ◎ ◎ △ ◎ △ ◎ ◎ ▢ ▢ △ ✕ ▢

Challenge 2
▢ ◎ ◎ △ ◎ △ ✕ ▢ ✕ △ ◎ ✕ ◎ ◎

Piranha team: Hold L1 + R1 + SELECT at the main menu. With these buttons held, press: ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ △ ▢

All eight tracks: Press and hold down L1 + R1 + SELECT at the main menu. With these buttons held down, press: ▢ ◎ △ ◎ ▢ to access the tracks.

Machine gun: Pause the game and hold: L1 + R1 + SELECT. Once you have these buttons held down, press: ▢ ◎ ✕ ▢ ◎ ✕ △

Infinite energy: Pause the game and hold: L1 + R1 + SELECT. With these buttons held, press: △ ✕ ▢ ✕ △ ✕ ▢ ◎

Infinite Weapons: Pause the game during play and hold: L1 + R1 + SELECT. With these buttons held, press: ✕ ✕ ▢ ▢ ◎ △

Infinite time: Pause the game and hold: L1 + R1 + SELECT down. With these buttons held, press: △ ▢ ▢ ◎ △ ▢ ◎

DRIVING TEST PAPER PSS02

GRAN TURISMO

1 **You are approaching the final chicane, a nose ahead of a competitor but they have a more powerful car. You should:**

A I think I'll have a mug of hot milk and try an early night. It's bingo tomorrow. ❏

B Start talking loudly about the more powerful nature of your opposition's car, wait for them to edge ahead and then storm off before the replay. ❏

C Lean your car into the opposing car, cutting across their nose, straighten up and dab your brakes. The other car should now bump you forward to get you out of the chicane and ahead in the straight. ❏

D The Conditional Perfect in this kind of sentence can be replaced by the Pluperfect Subjunctive with the same meaning. ❏

CIRCUIT BREAKERS

2 **You are approaching a sharp turn above a huge and dangerous precipice, the car in front is blocking your way. You should:**

A When I drive, I don't any more, I like a barley sugar to suck on. ❏

B Accelerate, fire all the weapons you have, ram into the car in front and start cackling. Then drive, out of control, off the edge. ❏

C Get on the inside of the opposing car on the straight and ease it over the edge. ❏

D No, verbs which are irregular in the Present are also irregular in the Imperative. ❏

3 **It is the beginning of the race, there are three other players and the countdown has begun, what is the correct procedure?**

A There are times when I just don't understand what all the fuss is about. ❏

B Talk loudly, jostle the other players and if you catch anyone's eye give them your best 'hard' stare. ❏

C Wait until the third beep of the countdown and press accelerate. This will give you a turbo start so you have to beware of any sharp bends. ❏

D *Se* can also be used to form impersonal sentences, here it translates as one, they, you or people. ❏

COOL BOARDERS 3

4 **You are in a multi-player, downhill race, heading for the jump with the most airtime on the course and are boarding right next to your mate. You should:**

A It's getting a lot colder nowadays and what with the cost of living, the discomfort and the fear of slipping on the ice it hardly seems worth it. ❏

B Hit the punch button again and again and again then go fakie and get yourself a few hundred points ❏

C Hit the punch button then veer away, get ready to jump and try to aim back to the centre of the piste for your landing. This should give you time to pick up max points, if you know your moves – and by now you should. ❏

D Subject pronouns are usually omitted in Spanish, except for emphasis or to avoid ambiguity. ❏

ATTITUDE

5 **You are a PlayStation racing game fanatic, you want to play loads of racing games and get the lowdown on the rest. You should:**

A I remember when it was a dust pan and brush, then it was those long handled Berwicks and now it's these cyclones... everything changes. ❏

B Go down to Dodgy Daz's Shed Shop, get him to chip your PlayStation and buy a load of 'imports' for a fiver. Get home realise your machine's buggered and your warranty is now invalid. Watch Eastenders in the evenings from now on. ❏

C Buy this magazine, read it from cover to cover, play all the demos. ❏

D *Lo hizo por el dinero.* He did it for the money. ❏

RESULTS

Mostly As
You are an elderly relative of someone who bought and owns this magazine. Rest up now, it is, as you say, bingo tomorrow.

Mostly Bs
You are a mate of the person who bought this magazine, if you had the sense you might see why your mate ALWAYS beats you at games.

Mostly Cs
You are the right-minded person who bought this magazine, you are intelligent, witty and have the respect of your peers.

Mostly Ds
Son estudiente el espanol.

On The Demo CD...

1. **Circuit Breakers**
    ...including new circuit for owners
2. **Colin McRae Rally**
    As good as *Gran Turismo*? You decide
3. **Destruction Derby 2**
    An absolute classic
4. **Gran Turismo**
    The best racer ever
5. **Motorhead**
    Speeding into the future
6. **Rage Racer**
    From racing masters Namco
7. **S.C.A.R.S.**
    Mario Kart on the PlayStation?
8. **Test Drive 5**
    Test drive it
9. **TOCA**
    Saloon racing extravaganza
10. **Wipeout 2097**
    Quicker than all the rest...

Inside...

Every racing game ever
reviewed and rated, including...
F1 98
TOCA 2
Colin McRae Rally
Gran Turismo
NASCAR 98
And Many More...

Plus!

Roll Cage
Psygnosis' latest speed
thrill revealed
Ridge Racer 4
Back in Pole Position?
Max Power Racing
Top Marques?
Driver
Breakin' The Law

Win!

Eight Racing Cars!*
Steering Wheels!
And More!

And... How To Win At
Any Racing Game Ever!
*remote control

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PSM